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Supplement to Business Today, Issue dated January 20 2013

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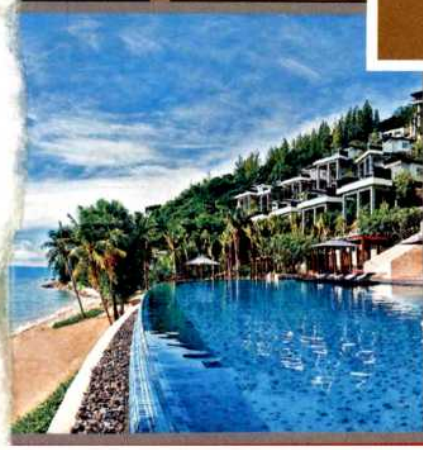

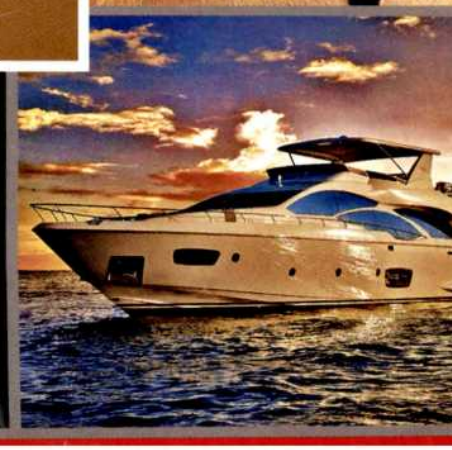

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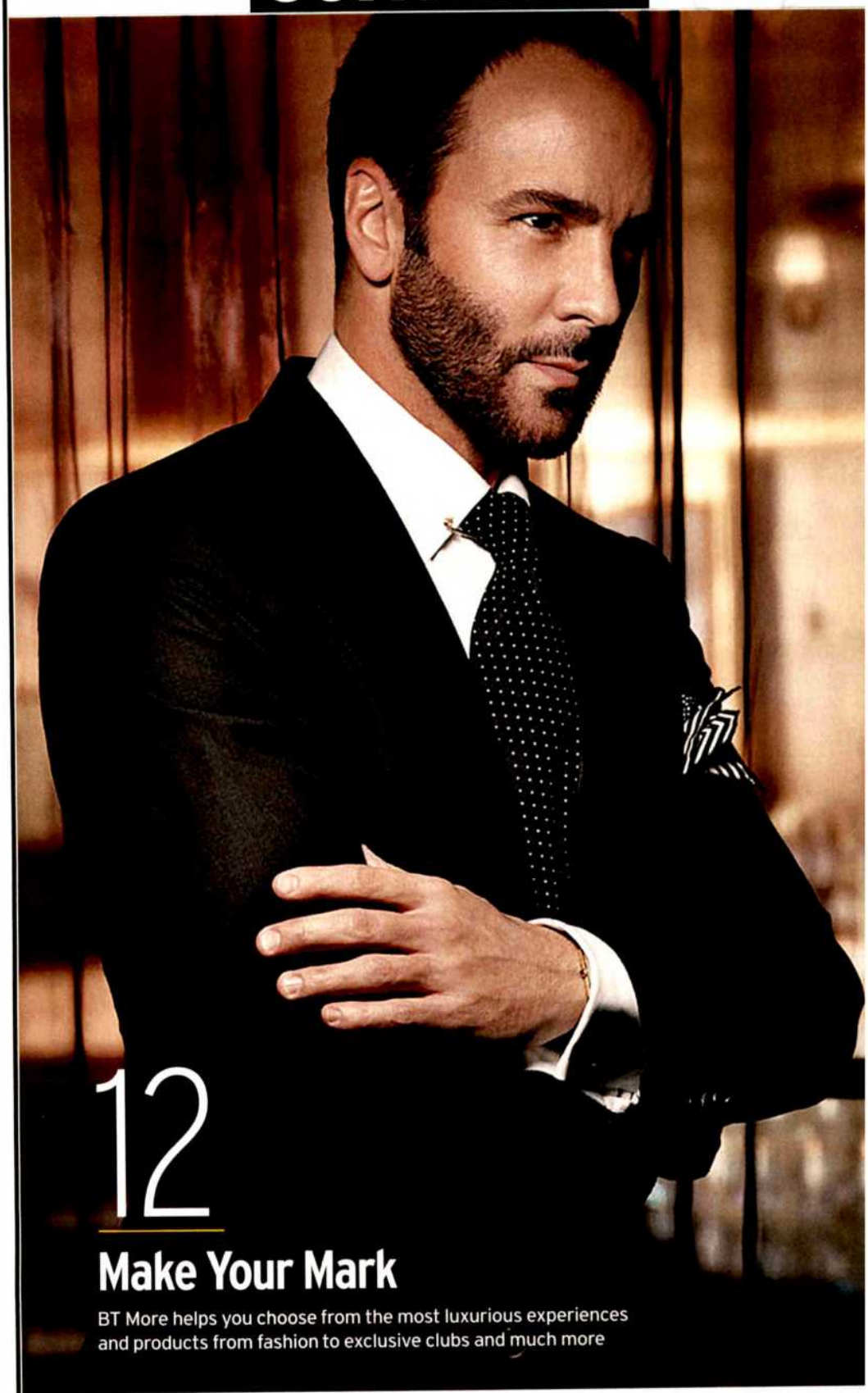

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Make Your Mark
BT More helps you choose from the most luxurious experiences and products from fashion to exclusive clubs and much more

INDIA TODAY GROUP

Volume 7 Number 1; January 2013
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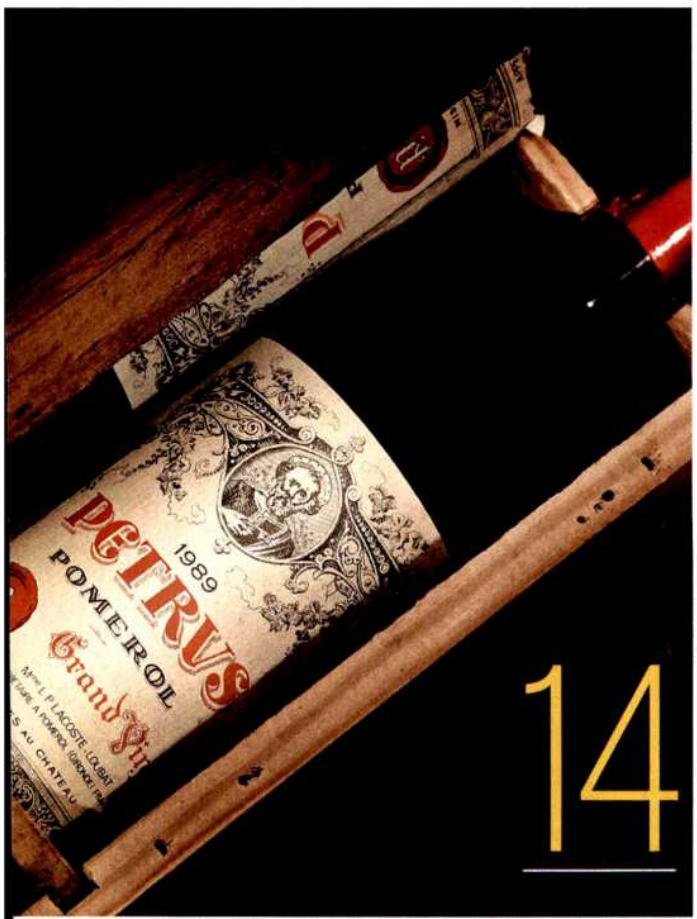

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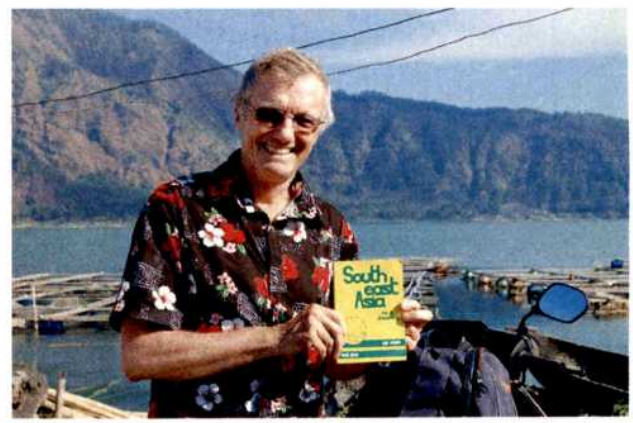

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In the Fast Lane

Indian supercar owners can now enjoy 'Track Days' at the Buddh International Circuit. **Stefan Mücke** tells you how to zip around responsibly.

Speed demons, your time has come. In fact, all you now need to do is get in your sports car or supercar, drive to the Buddh International Circuit in Greater Noida or any other race track in the country and enjoy a track day. But before you do, a professional GT driver has some advice for you.

FITNESS FIRST

In safety gear, which includes a helmet and racing suit, your body heats up quickly, while G-forces strain your muscles. An unfit driver can lose control, endangering himself and others. I recommend weight training to build strength as well as high-endurance and cardio exercises such as distance running or mountain biking. Driving a super car is not easy, so be prepared!

KNOW YOUR MACHINE

Supercars are not like regular cars. You need to understand what's under the hood and how far you can push the machine before it gets dangerous. Sign up for a performance driving course before heading to a race track. These are organised by supercar makers around the world. Schedule a class on your next holiday if you can't find one that is nearer to your home.

KNOW THE TRACK

If you plan on taking your supercar to a race track, make sure you familiarise yourself with the layout by walk or cycling around it the first time. Learn how each corner flows into the other. Also learn the correct speed and angle with which you should approach each turn. Start your drive slowly and build up speed progressively as you gain confidence with each lap.

KEEP YOUR CAR TICKING

Motor racing is expensive. In my bespoke Astron Martin Vantage GTE, it costs Rs 10,000 to race just one kilometre. That's roughly Rs 50,000 per lap of the Buddh Circuit. This includes wear and tear of the tyres and brake pads, which go quickly under racing conditions as well as engine oil, fuel, and track charges. Always check your brakes, gearbox, tyre wear and engine before you begin and once after you end. Happy and safe driving!

The writer is a driver with Aston Martin Racing. He finished third at the gruelling 24-hour Le Mans race.

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WHIP UP A CLASSIC

It's easy to concoct new cocktails, the art however lies in getting the classics right. Zdenek Kastanek, a Grey Goose Ambassador, tells you how to shake it right this festive season.

Screwdriver

Fill your glass with ice, pour 50ml of vodka and top it up with freshly squeezed juice. Garnish with an orange wedge. It works amazingly with fresh sweet lime juice and a touch of soda or as a Greyhound with fresh grapefruit juice. Add a pinch of salt and you have 'The Salty Dog'.

Trick Use good ice, a beautiful glass, super-premium quality vodka and freshly squeezed juice. Use the hand citrus juicer and don't over squeeze as the drink could taste bitter.

Grog

Grog is a hot or cold drink of rum, sugar or molasses, lemon juice and water. Take 50ml black rum, 20ml honey syrup and 15ml of lemon juice.

Trick Add water to honey, cardamom pods, cinnamon stick and cloves.

Blood and Sand

This is made out of 20ml scotch whisky, 20ml cherry herring, 20ml sweet vermouth, 20ml fresh orange juice. Add all ingredients into an empty three-piece shaker, top up with ice and shake hard.

Trick Don't shake too long and hard as the deep flavours of the whisky are lost. Garnish with orange zest.

Organic Is The Way To Go

Former cricketer **Dilip Doshi** is is playing a new game. His maiden entrepreneurial venture Organic Haus supplies more than 900 brands of organic products. If you're health-conscious and feel that regular foods are damaging your health, here's Doshi's pick of organic ingredients to stock up on.

THE AGAVE WAY

Eating out too often and can't cut back on the sugar in those desserts? While refined sweeteners with high glycemic load raise blood sugar quickly, agave syrup is low on the glycemic index, has fewer calories and is high on fructose. Use it in small quantities.

BEVERAGE BREAK

Before downing your tenth cup of tea at work, think organic. New tea infusions are made from herbs, fruits and spices and they thrive on soil which is chemical-free. The leaves are hand-picked into harvest bags. This method retains the natural essential oils and gives the teas a fresh taste and full bouquet of flavours and aromas. If you prefer coffee, organic beans are slowly roasted at a moderate temperature to produce a slightly shiny bean. This reduces the risk of colon cancer and acts as an excellent antioxidant.

AGAINST THE GRAIN

Grains such as amaranth, and quinoa are known for their health benefits, and now being used widely. In addition, one should stock up on pastas made from grains such as jowar, snacks made from canihua and buckwheat, and breads made from spelt and rye. These are all high in nutritional value. These grains are, as a whole, suitable alternatives for people who are allergic to gluten or those who shun processed foods.

OIL IS WELL

Get your home to go organic with organic sunflower, sesame or olive oil. These are low on cholesterol and leave you feeling lighter.

Antonio Bernini
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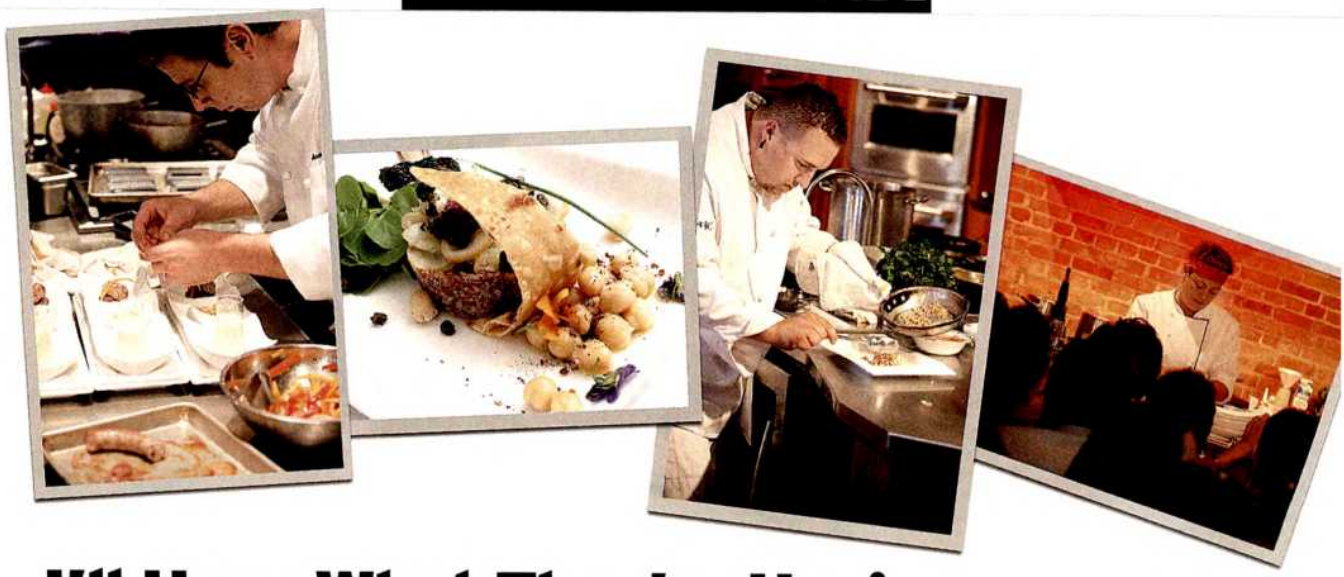
THINK TANK



I'll Have What They're Having

Don't know what to order or where to eat while on a business trip? Now get your culinary advice from the US's top chefs

For all the times you've fallen victim to trial and error while choosing where to eat in a new city, Chefs Feed now ensures your next eating out experience is spot on. Superseding dozens of existing food apps like Foodspotting, Zomato and YELP, this particular app establishes itself as the ultimate dining authority.

Now the next time you're in New York on business, or making a pitstop in Boston for a conference, take tips from some of the top chefs in the country instead of relying on the amateur suggestions from locals and friends. When founding brothers Jared and Steve Rivera started developing Chefs Feed for the iPhone in 2011, they did an extensive round-up of 600 of the best chefs and added them to their roster of food curators. The key factor that sets their app apart is that only these 600 professional chefs can upload a dish or recommend a restaurant on the app. There's just one caveat: the dish or restaurant must not be one of their own.

While web and mobile apps have been instrumental in democratising restaurant reviews, the lack of discerning food critics to tell us where and what to eat has led to crowdsourcing. By soliciting everyone's opinion, the margin for error is high.

The next time you're wondering where to get the best steak in New York, don't just go by heresay. Instead, log on and check out where Wolfgang Puck gets his and you won't be disappointed.

Sotheby's to auction the El Bulli wine cellar

After 27 successful years at the top, El Bulli, famed as the world's best restaurant shut its doors to convert itself into El Bulli Foundation, a culinary research and development center. In the aftermath of the restaurant's closing, famed Spanish chef Ferran Adrià will be selling off the contents of the restaurant's wine cellar in two separate auctions to be held by Sotheby's in April this year. Offering bidders a chance to grab up to 8,807 bottles curated by the restaurant over its life, the auction is expected to rake in an estimate of $1.6 million with proceeds going towards the El Bulli Foundation and Bullipedia, a digital project touted as the culinary equivalent of Wikipedia. With lots going for as high as $47,500 for a trio of Romanée Conti 1990s, here's your shot at owning some seriously good wines.

Antonio Berníni
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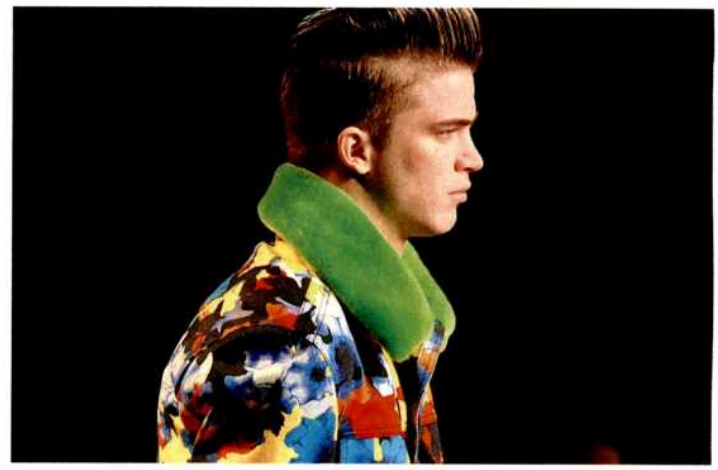
SOLELY FOR YOU

Selfridges, London, has long held the tag of the Best Department Store in the World and it has now become a one-stop shoe shop for men. The luxury retailer currently houses the largest men's shoe department in the world, with as many as 72,000 pairs of shoes on sale in 3,200 styles and across 250 brands. That's 10,000 square feet dedicated to satiating even the most obsessive of foot fetishes. The range of footwear stocked here ranges from relatively modest £25 Havaianas all the way to over-the-top £10,000 made-to-order Tom Fords, customised sneakers and bespoke brogues. And that's not all. This new department will soon feature two new salons: one dedicated to driving shoes, and another for create-your-own footwear from luxury brands Tod's, Prada and Tom Ford. The space has been organised by category, to match male shopping patterns. Stop by for that well-heeled look.

GET APP-DATED

The iPhone has introduced a new premium lifestyle application called iVIP Black to ensure that its users are kept in the know for the latest in luxury living. The only condition: prospective members must certify that their net worth of assets or income exceeds $1 million. Once approved, members are entitled to an introductory personal consultation where iVIP assesses the optimum manner in which to service the user's lifestyle. The app covers all aspects of luxury lifestyle from butlers and concierge services to private jets and personal styling. Members can geo-locate iVIP partner venues to avail unique privileges

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH



PARIS FASHION WEEK

The most fashionable time of the year is here again, with the year's first international fashion events for haute couture and menswear. Kicking off with the Milan Fashion Week between January 12 to 16, followed by Paris from January 16 to 24, line the runway for the latest trends in fashion.
Website ParisFashionWeekLive.com

INDIA ART FAIR

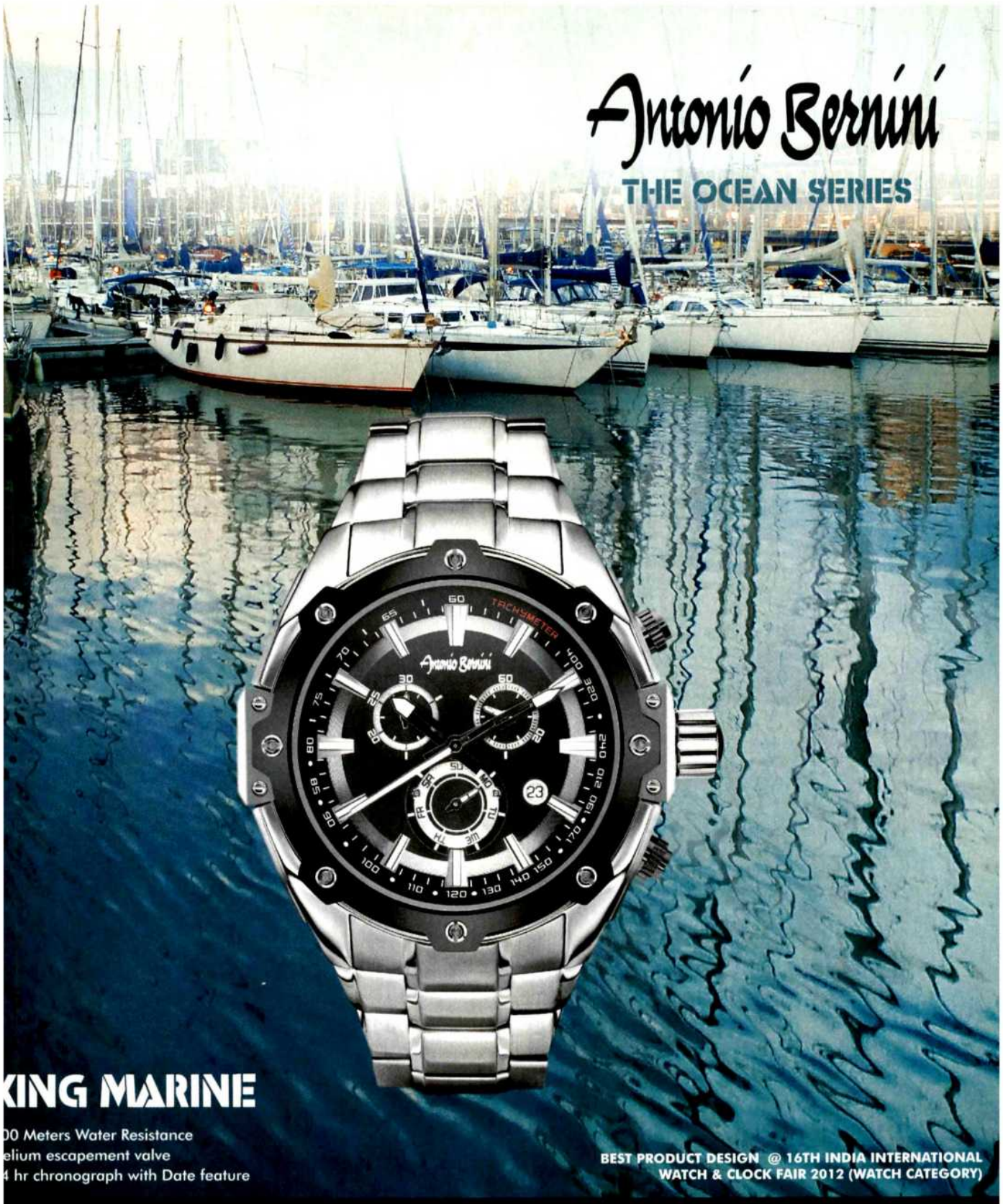
The 5th edition of the India Art Fair is scheduled to run between January 31 and February 3 in Delhi. The event will bring together 105 galleries from 24 countries to showcase 1,000 artists. Events will include forums, art projects, performances, book launches and curated walks. Highly recommended for those looking to buy works from upcoming artists. **Website** IndiaArtFair.in

JAIPUR LITERATURE FESTIVAL

The Jaipur Literature Festival is the largest literary festival and the most prestigious celebration of national and international literature in the country. Encompassing a range of readings, talks, debates, performances, workshops and activities, it will be held between January 24 to 28 in Jaipur.
Website JaipurLiteratureFestival.org

NBA GAMES 2013 IN LONDON

The city of London will become a part of basketball history as the famed NBA Games makes the journey from America to the UK on January 17. A huge amount of excitement is building at the O2 Arena when the Toronto Raptors go head-to-head with the New Jersey Nets. An absolutely unmissable event for all fans of the sport.
Website NBA.com



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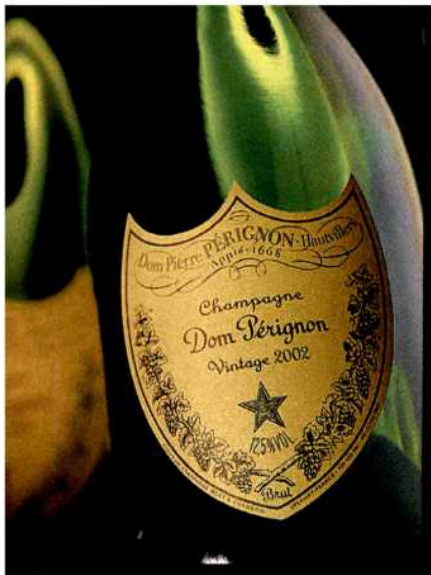

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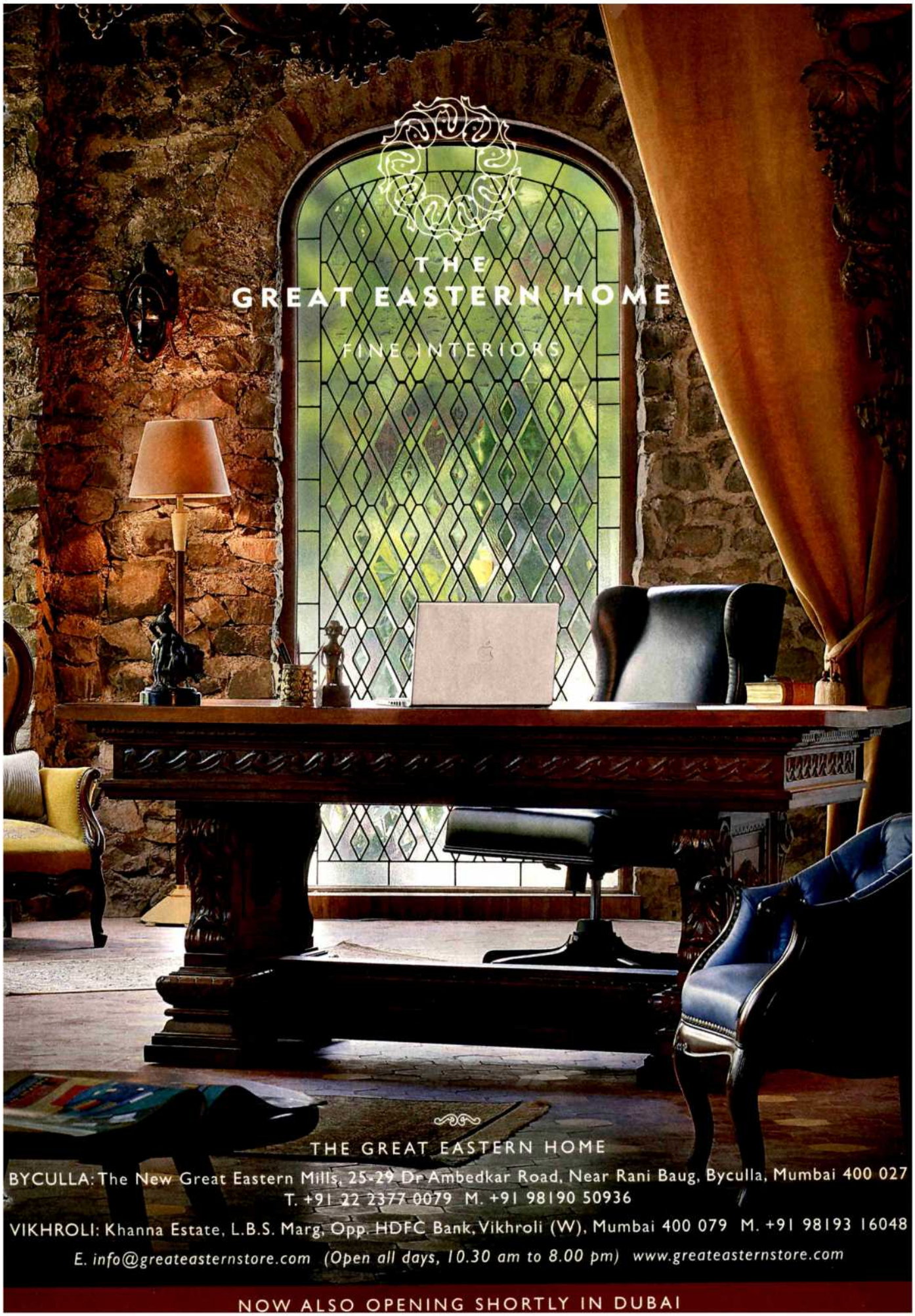
Your ultimate guide to the most exclusive cars, holidays, clubs, fashion, art, gadgets and fine wines money can buy



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CINGARI-THE TASTING ROOM

Delhi-based cigar store Cingari started Cingari-The Tasting Room, a connoisseurs' club in 2002 to help clients puff their favourite brands and meet fellow cigar lovers. Members enjoy privileges such as a special invitation to the Habanos Festival in Havana. Membership is by invitation only. **Contact** habanos@airtelmail.in

THE WINE SOCIETY OF INDIA

The society has a Wine Discovery Club that began operations in India in 2006. Membership benefits include exclusive access to six international wines every three months; a global vineyard visit programme; and classes to maintain your own bottles. It also organises wine events, including wine appreciations, sit-down winemaker dinners, and instructional masterclasses. To join you need to fill up a form on the company's wesbite from where the selection process will begin. **Website** Thewinesocietyofindia.com

MEMBERS ONLY

Five private and exclusive gentlemen's clubs for the connoisseur in you

VINTAGE AND CLASSIC CAR CLUB OF INDIA

The club is affiliated to Federation Internationale Vehicules Anciens (FIVA), which is the international body for vintage cars. VCCCI currently has 158 members, all of whom are avid collectors of classic automobiles. The club conducts workshops as well as trains its members in the art of restoring rare cars. It also serves as a platform to buy and sell members' cars. **Website** vccci.com

CVADO 1502

Derived from the Latin word Evado that means escape, Cvado means escape into the world of chocolates This Mumbai-based gourmet chocolate club hosts sampling events, provides tips on pairing chocolates with your favourite beverage, chocolate making workshops, visits to Valrhona's chocolate school in France as well as cocoa plantations in the Ivory Coast. **Website** Cvado1502.com

CHAINE DES ROTISSEURS BAILLIAGE OF INDIA

This international gastronomic society was founded in 1950 in Paris but its origins date as far back as the year 1248. Today the Chaine has 25,000 members across 70 countries. It arrived in India via Bangalore in 2008. The club's gastronomes meet four times a year. Membership to this club is by invitation only, and is restricted to a tight circle. **Web-site** Chainedesrotisseurs.com

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MEAN BUSINESS

Intercontinental flights can be a drag and even quite uncomfortable. However, with these business class cabins, you are sure of having a happy landing.

CATHAY PACIFIC A350

A well-thought-out herringbone (angled) design for its business-class cabin has made the A350 a popular choice among frequent fliers. The fully-flat seats are just over 82 inches long and provide additional lumbar support, while the angled storage compartment offers extra knee room when sleeping on your side. It also stores a vanity mirror, and has room for your glasses and gadgets. The cabinet door doubles as a privacy screen. The entertainment panel includes a multi-port connector to charge and connect a wide range of electronic devices. **Website cathaypacific.com**

EMIRATES A380

Emirates' business class cabin on its gigantic, new A380 is laid out in a 1-2-1 staggered layout, giving every seat direct access to the aisle. All seats convert into a fully-flat bed for total comfort and come equipped with their own side tables and mini-bars for soft drinks. Emirates' ICE system for in-flight entertainment has won universal praise over the years. In this cabin, it includes a massive screen with hundred of audio and movie options. **Website Emirates.com**

SINGAPORE AIRLINES A380

The new business class seats allow you to work and lounge comfortably. The dedicated sleeping surface is designed to accomodate virtually any sleeping position. Other amenities include ultra-soft leather, a height adjustable table, a vanity mirror as well as a personal coat hook. A centralised, all-in-one Business Panel features laptop power supply and 2 USB ports. Built-in office software allows you to create spreadsheets and presentations, without needing to pull out your laptop. An indulgent menu with full table service and tableware from Givenchy are an added bonus. **Website singaporeair.com**

LUFTHANSA B747-800

The new cabin places its seats in a 'V' configuration, i.e. angled towards each other in pairs. Geared for businessmen on the go, every seat has its own power outlet, USB port and noise-cancelling headphones that stow away in their own cubby under the armrest. LED mood lighting helps create a softer cabin atmosphere and changes subtly to ease jet lag as you cross time zones. On long-haul flights choose from lavish three-course meals, a dessert cart and an impressive beverage menu.
Website 747-8.lufthansa.com

QATAR AIRWAYS B777-300ER

The Premium Terminal at Doha International Airport exclusively for business and first class passengers makes it a great transit option. The new business seats are configured in a 2-2-2 layout and are fully flat in sleep position. To keep you pampered, guests receive an Aigner vanity kit, while the welcome drink is Laurent Perrier Champagne (the wine list also features some excellent picks). Each of Lufthansa's new aircraft are fitted with state-of-the-art audio visual 'on-demand' systems. Entertainment options are available in English, Hindi and Arabic. You can also create a custom music playlist pulling in songs from upto 50 different CDs.
Website qatarairways.com

HONORARY MENTIONS

BRITISH AIRWAYS BO 747

BA's Club World seats are especially designed to be sleep-friendly. A new softer mattress, memory-foam headrest and cosy quilt mean that you'll be able to stretch out on the fully-flat bed in blissful comfort.

TURKISH AIRLINES A300-300

For drinks, choose from fresh juices, champagne or turkish tea. Meal options include any of seven appetisers, four entrees, and desserts, while on-board chefs can whip up custom salads. As a bonus, Turkish Airlines flies all golf kits for free.

SWISS AIR A340

Swiss offers business class passengers several check-in options. If you are traveling with hand baggage only, you can even check in directly at the gate. Simply show your ticket to immigration and you receive your boarding pass once you arrive at the departure gate.

FLYING HIGH

When it comes to high-end, luxury travel, charters are the name of the game. Let the good times roll.

SAILING THE STRAITS

Azimut Yachts takes you around Turkey and Greece in Duke, a 103' SL superyacht which pampers up to 8 guests in its furnished cabins, sun beds and open salons. The five prompt servers pair wine and cheese and double up as massuers whenever you like. **Website** Azimutyachts.com

YACHTING AROUND

Mitsubishi's O'mega is a 83m luxury yacht that stands out for its business centre that keeps you connected on the azure waters off Europe. Of course, the jacuzzis, massage parlours and theatre will keep you hooked once you're done with work. **Website** Charterworld.com

PARTY IN THE SKIES

The Oberoi group has extended its hospitality brand into the aviation sector with a private jet charter. As a bonus, a hotel limousine takes you from the hotel to the airport, while a conceirge staffer escorts you past airport protocols. Each jet seats up to six high-flyers on soft leather sofas. **Website** Ooberoihotels.com

BUSINESS ON BOARD

Comlux Aviation understands that the Indian businessman needs much more than internet access to get work done. Here's an airline that organises power lunches and dinners on board. In case you're feeling overworked, indulge in a herbal bath and doze off on the wellness cushions. **Website** Comluxaviation.com

FLYING COLOURS

Royal Jet rolls out the red carpet at its private terminal at Abu Dhabi. After a smooth security and baggage check, you're welcomed aboard a jet that's upholstered and furnished for a king. Fine champagne and gourmet meals add to the fun. **Website** Royaljetgroup.com

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HERE ART THOU

Art is as much about style as it is about expression. You can't go wrong with these five masters

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Tyeb Mehta was among the first prominent post-Independence artists. His work broke away from the nationalist Bengal School of art and embraced modernism, and was hailed for his post-impressionist sense of colour. **WHY** *Trussed Bull*, 1994 sold for ₹11.5 lakh in 2001 but has appreciated by 1,967 percent in the past five years.

INVERTED REALITY

Akbar Padamsee is known for his use of plastic emulsions, lithography and modern computer graphics to invert reality as we usually tend to see it. **WHY** An untitled painting by him was auctioned for a whopping $1,426,500 (₹7.81 cr) at Sotheby's in March, 2011.

FLUID IDEAS

Jehangir Sabavala ties up light, colour, texture and medium. Some love him for his Parisian Cubism, that harkens back to Picasso, while others revere his graphic panoramic genius. **WHY** *Vespers I*, which was estimated to sell for approximately £100,000 (₹88.7 lakh) was finally bought for twice that estimate at Bonham's last June.

GEOMETRIC ABSTRACTIONS

S H Raza broke free from European realism and focussed on Indian inner vision, by emphasising on the bindu or centre point. **WHY** He became the priciest modern artist in the world when his seminal work *Saurashtra* went for $3,486,965 (₹16.42 cr) at a Christie's auction, in June 2010.

REFLECTIONS ON A STILL LIFE

K H Ara is amongst India's first modern artists to have played on the aesthetic nuances of the female nude. These are said to have influences of French post impressionists Cézanne and Matisse. **WHY** His market worth has gone up from ₹5.46 lakh in 2011 to ₹68.62 lakh in 2012.

GRAF VON FABER-CASTELL

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The Pen of the Year 2012 combines two materials that could hardly be more complete opposites: oak, the symbol of eternity, and gold, the symbol of wealth and good fortune.

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Visit: *www.graf-von-faber-castell.com*
For enquiries write to: *premium@faber-castell.co.in*

The dark orange Superluminova of the Oris Tubbataha Limited Edition indexes and hands are emphasised by contrasting dark blue face of the watch, ensuring the time can be tracked at a quick glance.

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The motif on the back of the Oris Tubbataha Limited Edition displays a shark, paying homage to the endangered marine creatures, which live in the Tubbataha Reefs Park in the Philippines.

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DOM PÉRIGNON ONOTHÈQUE 1996

Produced by the house of Moet & Chandon, this Onothèque label indicates that a Dom Pérignon vintage has reached its second peak in maturity, with optimized intensity. A whiff of the bottle creates an aroma of praline mixed with citron and dried figs, and explodes on the tongue. Price on request.

COHIBA ESPLENDIDO

Conceived by Che Guevara himself, the Cohiba Esplendido is a super-premium cigar preferred by the likes of Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro. Smoked for years by only the most rich and powerful, these were an instant hit when they were released to the public in 1982.

OF SMOKE & SPIRIT

Whether for investment, collection or just a love of all things fine, we give you the very best in liquor and cigars to add to your wishlist.

JOHNNIE WALKER BLUE LABEL HEIRLOOM

The master-crafted Heirloom by Johnnie Walker Blue Label, is the ideal collector's edition. Created to reflect the style of whiskies in the early 19th century, this blend is an exquisite masterpiece that has been ensconced in a case designed by Tarun Tahiliani. Priced at ₹19,000, it comes enclosed in a beautifully handcrafted case of leather, embellished with Blue Sapphire Swarovski and 18k gold electroplating.

Hailed as one of the most distinguished and globally sought after wines, a bottle of Château Petrus wine has the status of a collectible blue chip wine. Naturally it is one of the most expensive too, since the wines are made from top quality merlot grapes, and are never filtered for the fear of losing out on richness. splurge on a bottle on your next trip overseas. Upwards of Rs 120,000 for a 1995 vintage bottle.

BALLANTINE'S 30 YO

Considered the preferred choice amongst discerning businessmen, the Ballantine's 30 Year Old is a rare whiskey with a deep gold hue that exudes a subtle sweetness with hints of oak and vanilla. Housed in a strong, yet luscious body, it bursts onto the palate in a balanced blend of rich and mellow notes and lingers on the palate. Available at the Delhi Duty Free for ₹18,300.

LOUIS XIII DE RÉMY MARTIN

The epitomy of French refinement, the Louis XIII Cognac is an extraordinary blend of grande Champagne eaux-de-vie, the most prestigious of the six crus classed in the region of Cognac. To enhance the experience, it has been encased in an exquisite crystal decanter, individually numbered and ringed with 24 carats of fine gold; a work of art requiring the talent of 11 exceptional craftsmen. Priced approximately ₹200,000 within the country.

RESORT TO THE BEST

Long hours, constant travel and business dinners tend to separate you from family. Here are five, great getaway ideas.

REJUVENATE, KOH SAMUI STYLE

Conrad Koh Samui let's you check into one- and two-bedroom villas that come with private infinity pools and barbeque grill stations and overlook the gulf of Thailand. The villa gives you privacy but also allows family bonding over meals. Recommended for families with teenagers.
Website Conradhotels.3.hilton.com
Price Upwards of ₹35,000 per villa per night.

THE KERALA ADVENTURE

Coconut Lagoon, Kumarakom spoils you in heritage mansions with private pools. The resort offers family activities that are fun. You can also go on a sunset cruise through the canals or learn local cuisines in group cooking lessons. You could also visit the bird sanctuary and neighbouring organic farms with kids.
Website Casinogroupkerala.com
Price ₹20,000 per night for a villa

MAKE A TURKISH SPLASH

Casa Dell'Arte in the Turkish resort of Bodrum is a seafront hotel that the kids will love. A Kids Club offers a range of activities like art, films, karaoke and storytelling. They even have a babysitter so you can sneak in a romantic dinner. **Website** Casadellartebodrum.com
Price ₹38,000 per night for a villa.

UNDERWATER MAGIC

Four Seasons Resort is perched on the Maldivian island of Laanda Giraavaru. Perfect if your family loves activities like coral reef building, catmaran sailing and fish feeding. While you're spending alone time with the spouse at the shisha bar, the kids can keep busy with water sport and yoga lessons.
Website fourseasons.com
Price Upwards of ₹50,000 per villa per night

LANGKAWI LANGUOR

The Andaman, Langkawi taps the explorer in you. Take a cruise, enjoy the signature kahuna wave massage, or take a lesson in coral feeding and cleaning. For children, there's a Young Explorer's club with interactive games and beach sports. **Website** Starwoodhotels.com
Price ₹30,000 per night

MADE TO MEASURE

Ready-to-wear is a second citizen in the world of bespoke perfection. Go custom for a fit that's all yours.

FROSDICK OF LONDON

Acquire the Million Dollar Dandy package—14 Savile Row suits, 28 dress shirts, 28 silk ties, 14 pairs of shoes—from Frosdick, London for a cool $1 million. The steep price includes the client being flown down to London for fabric selection and measurements by the staff at Savile Row, Clifford Street and Jermyn Street, and another visit to complete the fittings. **Website** Milliondollardandy.com

CUSTOM COBBLING BY BERLUTI

Olga Berluti, the only woman bespoke shoemaker in the world offers bespoke cobbling services out of stores in Paris, Japan, London and Milan. Hand-cut, hand-sewn, and hand-burnished, get a pair on your next trip overseas.

CUSTOM OVERCOATS

Gieves & Hawkes' bespoke service combines the finest ready-to-wear clothes with the flexibility of personalisation for an overcoat that reflects your personal style. To confirm an appointment with their personal tailoring consultants send out an email to pts@gievesandhawkes.com

TOM FORD TAILORING

Avail of Tom Ford's made-to-order services at Emporio Mall, New Delhi. Once you are measured, the staff identify an appropriate mannequin and modify it to your fit. This is then sent to the factory where the suit is created. Upon completion, alterations are made to ensure a perfect fit.

A-MAN HING CHEONG, HONG KONG

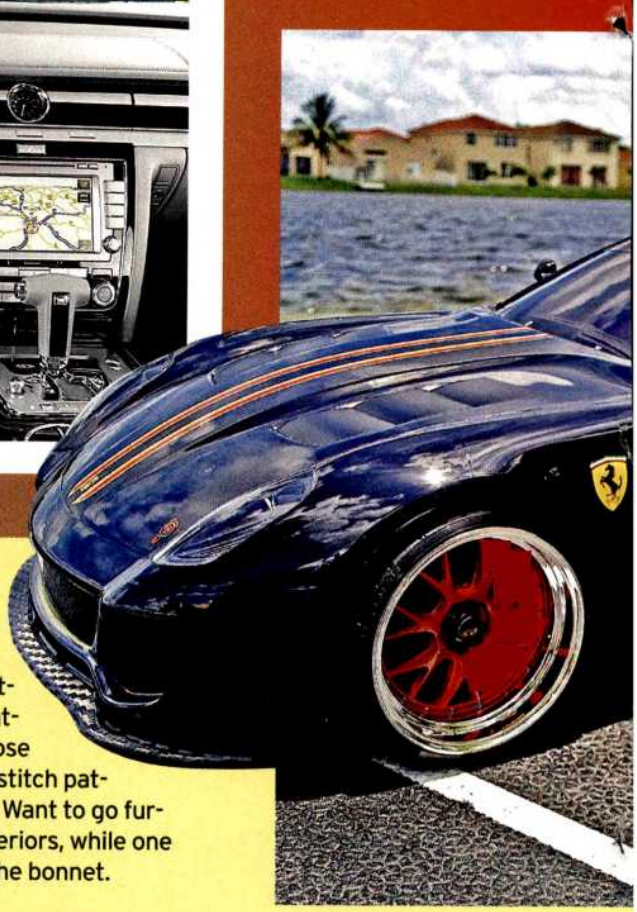
A-Man Hing Cheong, on the mezzanine floor of the Mandarin Oriental in Central Hong Kong is amongst a handful of tailors renowned for world-class tailoring in the city. The process requires an initial visit followed by two additional fittings and costs upward of $10,000.

WONDER WHEELS

Your car is an extension of yourself. Transform it with these luxury personalisation services from the world's top auto makers that elevate your wheels from great to wow.

VOLKSWAGEN PHAETON UNDERRATED AND UNDERSTATED

The Phaeton is a very underrated luxury car. Consider this: it can drive all day at 300 kmph with an outside temperature of 50 °C, and insides at 22 °C. Crafted entirely by hand, owners can choose exterior and interior colours with the customisation "limited only by a client's fantasy and finances". Some pick drop-down LCD screens, a cigar humidor or even fridges. If you want real personalisation, VW will even invite you to its 'Transparent Factory' in Dresden to install your own steering wheel and driver's seat.



FERRARI: ONE-TO-ONE

Ferrari's 'One-to-One' service will modify everything except features that affect a car's performance or safety. On the outside you can choose body colours, double-or triple-coat paintwork, and carbon-fibre inserts and trims. On the inside, choose upholstery colours, materials for your seats and dashboard, stitch patterns and even custom engravings on the dedication plaque. Want to go further? Some customers ask for luggage sets to match the interiors, while one asked everyone who built his car to sign their names under the bonnet.

LAMBORGHINI AD PERSONAM

Lamborghini's Ad Personam program is available on its entire range. Customers start with either pre-designed equipment packages such as the leather or carbon packages or specify their own designs. The only limits are safety. Many ask Lamborghini to match their own colour samples. One Gallardo owner even requested matching colours inside and out, while another had Lamborghini match the exteriors of his home. The possibilities are literally endless...just dare to dream.

THE BENTLEY MULLINER PROGRAM

Bentley's Mulliner service employs 120 people at Bentley's HQ in Crewe, England. Start with a simple all-wood gear knob and go all the way to armour plating, drop down LCD screens, bottle coolers, electric rear blinds, folding wood tables and even mobile office equipment. Customers can make one-off requests, however outlandish ones have been declined to protect the brand's reputation. Bentley encourages its Mulliner clients to visit Crewe and interact directly with the build team.

EXECUTIVE DINING

The biggest business deals are made while breaking bread. Book a table at these restaurants that promise to impress.

HAMADAYA IN TOKYO

With eight private dining rooms seating groups as small as two and as large as 60, this iconic Japanese restaurant can accommodate business meetings of various sizes. A traditional Japanese restaurant, centrally located in Tokyo's Nihonbashi-Ningyocho, it's a definite go to for executive dining.

THE CLARIDGES IN NEW DELHI

The Senate Executive Lounge at The Claridges in New Delhi sets the tone for new mergers formed over a glass of rare whiskey and delectable international cuisine. Go old school in the setting of a bygone era and charm your clients with regal service amidst total privacy.

BUSINESS IN LONDON'S WEST END

Gun to impress with a dollop of oomph at Texture Restaurant & Champagne Bar in London's West End. The plush interiors coupled with food that looks like art on a plate and tastes every bit as good, are sure to make an impression on even the most discerning of clients.

LUNG KING HEEN IN HONG KONG

Located in bustling Central Hong Kong with a panoramic view over Victoria Harbour, Lung King Heen vows with contemporary Cantonese cuisine emphasising seafood. Their private dining room serves as the ideal setting for intimate business deals.

WASABI BY MORIMOTO AT THE TAJ MUMBAI

the legendary Taj Mahal hotel in Mumbai houses Wasabi By Morimoto offering authentic Japanese with fine whiskey to match. Their superb private dining accompanied by a personal chef and exclusive sushi preparation makes it the perfect choice for wining and dining potential clients.

KIT OUT YOUR MAN CAVE

From 65-inch flatscreens to the most luxurious massage chairs, every man needs these in his den.

PANASONIC TC-P65VT50 3D PLASMA HDTV

With one of the sharpest black-and-white contrasts in a TV, crisp images and bright colours, this plasma beats the competition hands down. Vast connectivity options allow you to browse the internet while apps come pre-installed for services such as YouTube and Skype (a ₹7,000 camera is optional). What's more, you can even download a Samsung app to your smartphone to turn it into a remote control. **Price:** ₹2,03,000

PINAKIN ANGLE BAR

Inspired by a "tuxedo-ed maharaja", this piece from designer Pinakin Patel's collection oozes sophisticated luxury. You can customise your bar from a range of premium materials. In this picture, the main shell is made from a high-gloss rosewood, with black ostrich leather shutters. If you love your drink and enjoy throwing parties, this one's a must-buy. **Price:** ₹4,00,000- 6,00,000

KLIPSCH THX ULTRA2 7.2 SYSTEM

Nothing like sinking into an easy chair and pumping up the volume at the end of a rough week. This Klipsch audio system can pump 105 db evenly to a 3,000 cubic foot room. High and mid-range sounds are smooth, while the distinctive bass thumps through the room. Each note rings perfectly true. **Price:** ₹6,95,000

SOGNO DREAMWAVE MASSAGE CHAIR

Massage chairs are god's gift to weary corporates and this one by Japanese designer Toshiyuki Kita, blends ancient shiatsu techniques with modern design. It has eight pre-set profiles from a vigorous morning session to a night one that allows you to wind down. Set it to work on your shoulders, head, back, legs and arms. A built-in heater keeps you snug through winter. **Price:** ₹4,25,000

Postcards from the Travelling Man

Tony Wheeler, co-founder of *Loney Planet*, talks about his nomadic existence, special places he has visited, and shares a bucket list of destinations

Bucket lists are part wish list and part inspiration and I've been lucky enough to have put some big ticks beside some of the best travel dreams on offer that make my heart beat a little faster and make the world a better place. Like Antarctica, which sounds like it should be a classic once-in-a-lifetime experience, but in fact it's amazing how many people want to go back for a second look. I for one did the standard Antarctic experience on my first go, a boat from Ushaia at the southern end of Argentina down to the Antarctic Peninsula. But that was not enough and I went back a second time to look at South Georgia.

Any good bucket list needs an iconic road trip and one of my favourites has been a drive across the USA from coast to coast, or *sea to shining sea* as the song goes. I did it not once but twice, west to east and then east to west, touched on 24 states (exactly half of the 'lower 48') and made the trip in a classic old 1959 Cadillac. Sweet dreams are made of such things.

As a keen scuba diver there were inevitably some great dives on my list, but a week spent on a live aboard dive boat at the Truk (or Chuk) Lagoon in the Pacific, tops the lot. A series of American air raids sent a huge fleet of Japanese ships to the bottom of the

Tony Wheeler at Nyiragongo volcano

Queen Mary 2

lagoon during WWII and there's one word and only one way to describe the wreck diving: otherworldly.

I'm an enthusiastic walker as well and although I've done great long walks in Africa, Europe and Australia, the Himalayas is still my walking favourite and the trek to the Everest base camp remains one of the best walks I've ever made. Great scenery, tough enough to test you, the feeling that you're walking with history and, most important, wonderful people to see you through.

A wildlife experience? African gorillas have to top my list. It's not just their awesome presence, it's the way they ignore you that I love best! Rwanda and Uganda are prime gorilla watching countries, but I've been lucky enough to see them in a couple of more unusual locations such as the Central African Republic and Congo.

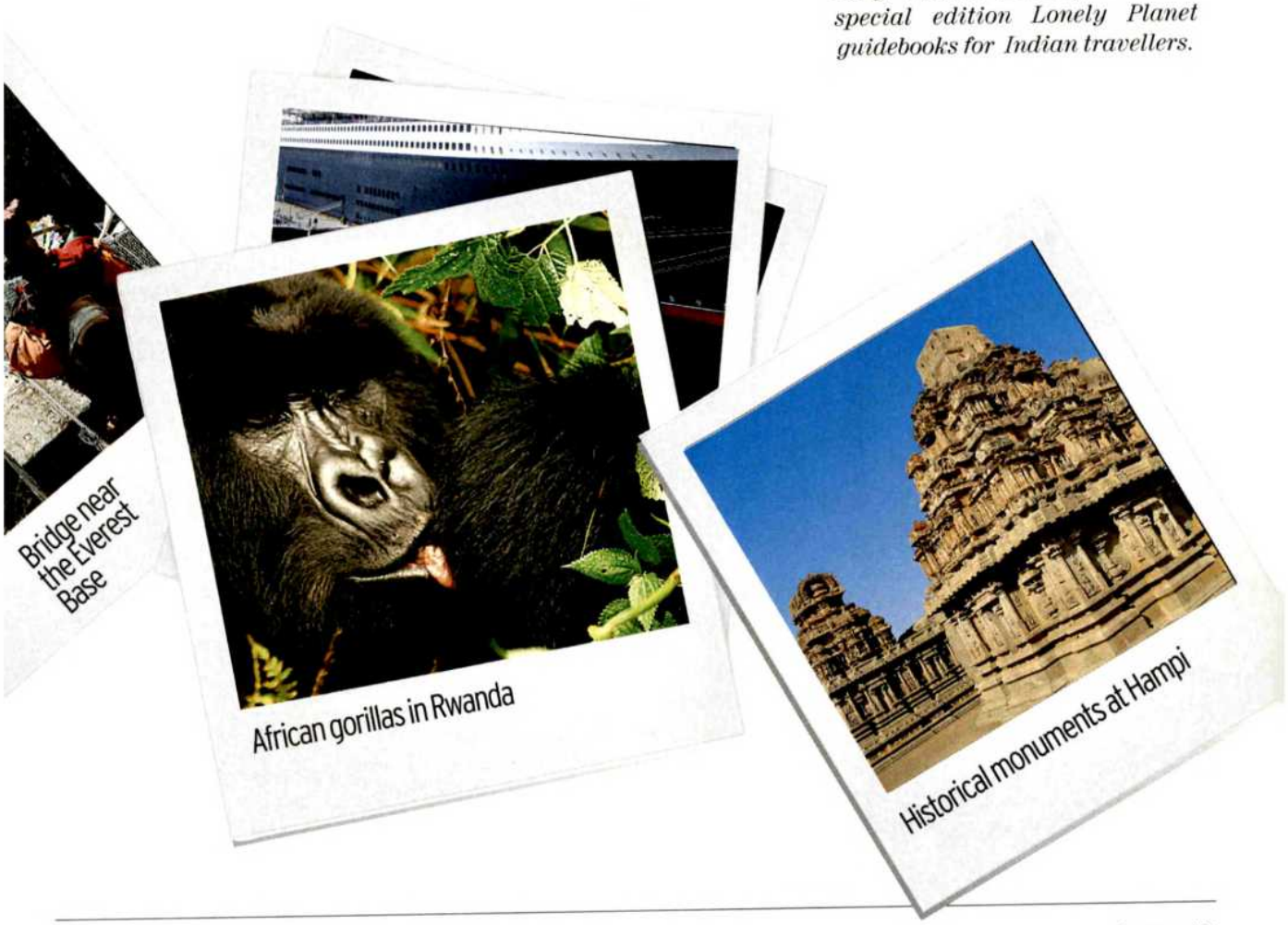
That's five of my bucket list contenders which I've already ticked off, but what about the ones still waiting to be experienced? Well every good list needs a great railway journey and for some reason I've never done the greatest of the lot, the Trans-Siberian Express. So the Big Red Train Ride right across Russia is sitting high on my to-do travel list; it's just a matter of it all coming together at the right time.

Also, while I'm not a cruise ship enthusiast I did cross the Atlantic on the *Queen Mary 2* this year, but that's a 'crossing' not a 'cruise' as the ocean liner aficionados will tell you. The ship trip which is still on my list, however, is the Aranui, a cargo-passenger ship which makes regular two week circuits from Tahiti out to some of the more exotic islands of French Polynesia.

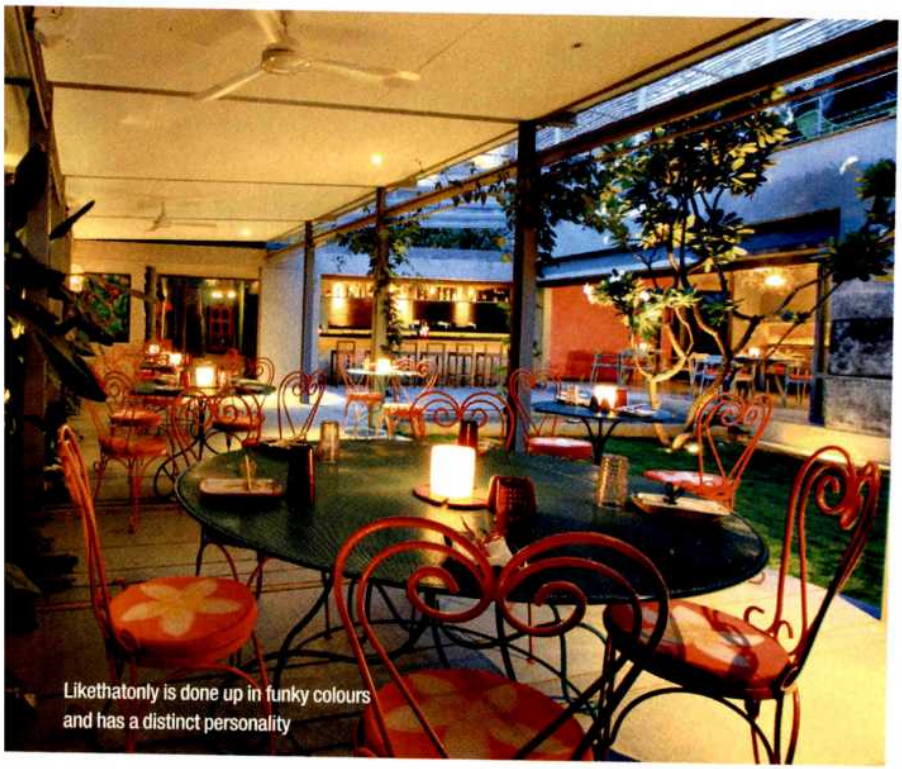
There are lots more walks still on my list, starting with the famous pilgrim trail across France and Spain, the Route of St James or Camino Santiago which concludes in the Spanish town of Santiago de Compostela.

Finally two Indian experiences feature on that 'still to be done' list. One of them involves me swinging my leg across an Enfield India motorcycle and travelling somewhere interesting across its vast terrain. Also, over the years I've been to plenty of 'lost cities,' Bagan in Myanmar, Angkor Wat in Cambodia, Great Zimbabwe in Zimbabwe, Machu Picchu in Peru, Persepolis in Iran, but one famous Indian ancient city has evaded me. So there it is, number 10 on my bucket list: Hampi in India.

Tony Wheeler recently launched special edition Lonely Planet guidebooks for Indian travellers.



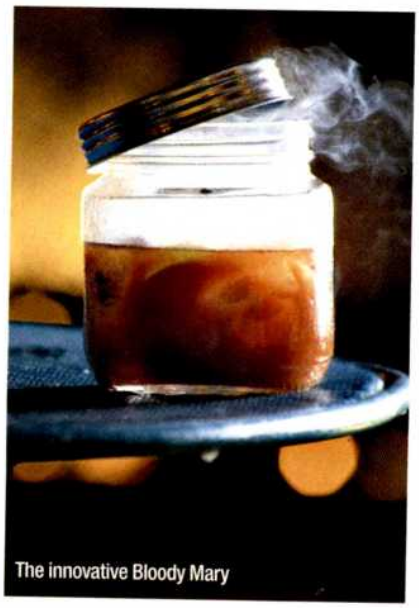
GOURMET CENTRAL



Likethatonly is done up in funky colours and has a distinct personality

Culinary Mash-ups

Asian-inspired restaurant Likethatonly in Whitefield, Bangalore, is perfect for that leisurely office lunch BY AKHILA SEETHARAMAN



The innovative Bloody Mary

Who'd have thought that upside down kettles could function as a greeting? At Likethatonly in Bangalore's suburb of Whitefield, they do a fine job welcoming visitors into a wonderful, whimsical interior. You enter only to find your curiosity piqued again by a water fountain concocted out of a old bathtub and repurposed gramophone machine; highly-recommended for a long, informal lunch with co-workers. The fixed price bento box lunches offer vegetarian, seafood and meat options. These also make for an attractive proposition for office lunches, given that this part of Whitefield has a spate of new IT companies. My dining companions who work in the vicinity were impressed enough to want to return for their own office lunch the following week.

To begin with, the Bloody Mary felt just right on the sun-kissed Friday afternoon I was there. Their version comes in a jar full of smoke (from their smoke machine, I was told). Flavours of Indonesian clove cigarette gutan garam and earl grey tea conspired to give it a smoky twist. A few sips in and it won me over with its cheekiness.

The steamed dimsum arrived next. The pork and duck dimsum was roundly praised, but the prawn dimsum, although passable, didn't hold together well enough and started to fall apart. The spinach and corn couldn't be faulted though, and the accompanying sauces were excellent. The salad of sake-soaked pear and blue cheese with almond slivers and aragula was exquisite twist on a thoroughly enjoyable classic. The wok-tossed soft shell crab could have been more meaty, but my two co-diners swore that the pork ribs were outstanding. As with the salad, the asparagus tempura roll hit a perfect pitch, juxtaposing a crispy tempura coating with cream cheese, seaweed and sushi rice.

My Asian-style tacos, stuffed with greens, mung beans, peanuts and silken tofu packed a refreshing, mustardy punch. I would definitely order it again. Finally, the avocado parfait and lemon tarts made for a lovely, light landing after this gastronomical flight. Chef Manu Chandra described the food as "mashup, and not fusion". Each dish has one or two elements that sets it apart from its traditional counterpart. It's Likethatonly!

BT MORE RECOMMENDS

- Sake-poached pear, blue cheese salad
- Asparagus tempura roll

Meal for two (without alcohol) ₹2500 plus taxes ✆ +(080) 6547-5610

Meal with a View

Take your clients to a chic, new place by the Qutab Minar for drinks and dinner that are top notch. BY PRACHI BHUCHAR

It's a Wednesday evening and your boss has just told you you need to a pick a place to the take your clients from Singapore. Mind you, they are used to eating some outstanding food so this is your opportunity to not only showcase Delhi's newfound culinary prowess to your guests but to show off your knowledge of the latest on the social circuit to your boss. If you are in such a dilemma and are located in Gurgaon or South Delhi, head to the newly-launched Smoke House BBQ.

The space, which is located on a terrace, is informal but chic and upbeat, so it works well especially with clients who are in theor 30s to early 40s. The chairs resemble pods and look a bit space age but are extremely comfortable and the view is 'wow'. I know the Qutub Minar is not lit up or anything but having a meal with a beautiful view of the monument makes the experience that much richer.

And then of course there is the no-fuss, well-seasoned food and extremely well thought-out menu. There are a selection of BBQ-type salads and sandwiches and of course a great range off the grill. A staple like corn-on-the-cob gets a smoky twist here which is crunchy and elevates it from a pedestrian starter to something exciting. The same goes for the Atomic Drumsticks which are seriously potent (would recommend you check the spice quotient of your clients before trying this) and leave your lips and tongue tasting delicious fire. Just the stuff Delhi winters demand. For mains I would recommend the grilled salmon with whiskey maple soy glaze which is cooked beautifully or the pulled pork and sweet mango pickle burger which is served up elegantly with some excellent coleslaw and fries that are crisp and oil-free. I tried the charmoula spiced chargrilled tiger prawns which were a tad disappointing as the prawns had been overcooked and the quinoa it was served with was too dry. The banoffee pie as it is labelled is a great way to end the meal but avoid the gooey chocolate slice which seemed simply too dense.

That apart, the drinks are a big plus at Smoke House BBQ. Given the lineage of the brand, it is only fitting they serve good cocktails. The cococolada is almost like a pina colada dessert so order it towards the end of your meal or try one of their special margaritas which feature seasonal flavours. The service is attentive and the staff extremely quick on the uptake.

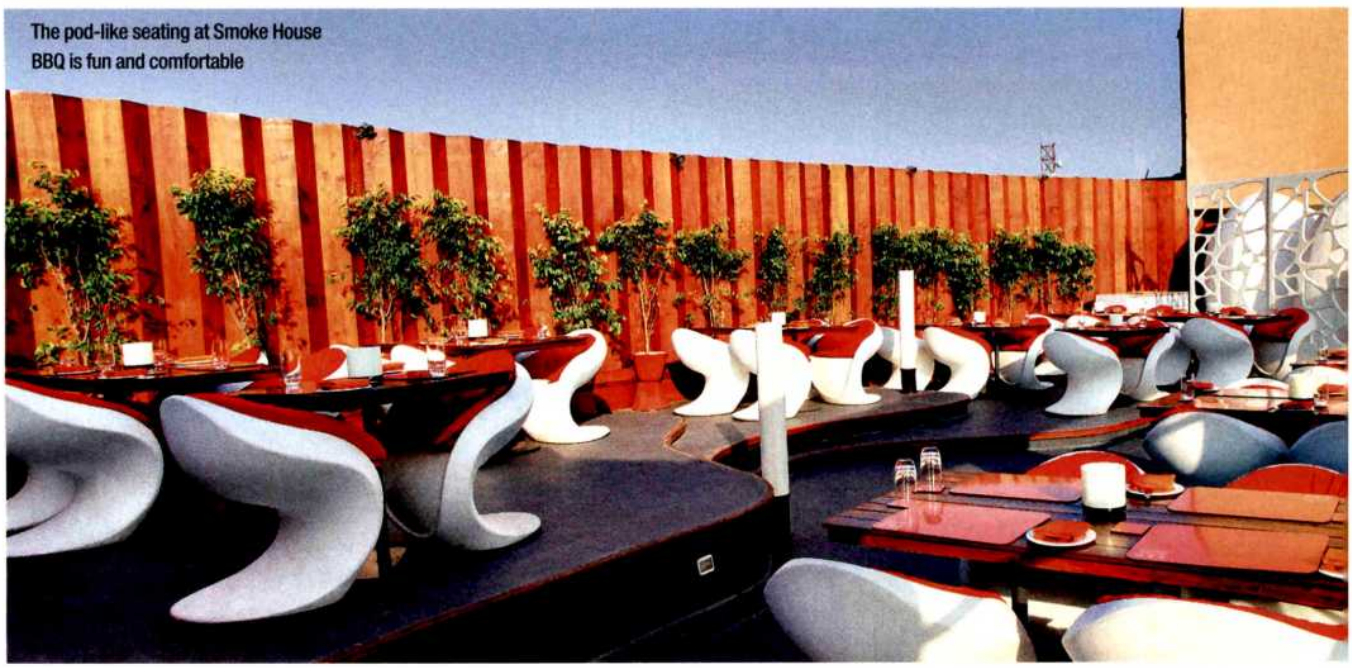
Highly recommended for an evening with clients, especially between November and March when the Delhi weather is on its behaviour and the joys of dining outdoors abundant.

BT MORE RECOMMENDS

- Cococolada
- Atomic Drumsticks
- Banoffee Pie

Meal for two (without alcohol) ₹2,400 plus taxes

Reservations +918800777074



The pod-like seating at Smoke House BBQ is fun and comfortable

HEALTH SNIPPETS

Lifestyle

5 MORE REASONS TO GET WALKING

A brisk walk will do your body and mind a world of good. Besides your health, as you read on the left, here are five other reasons you should get moving.

- A brisk, morning walk keeps your body and mind active from the get go. It's also a great time to plan the rest of your day.
- At the end of the day, a leisurely stroll helps digest your dinner, clear your head and let's you breathe some fresh, non-air-conditioned air.
- If you have a dog, not only is a walk a great way to get both of you exercised, it is also a great way to spend quality time bonding with each other.
- Last but not least, walking is great for the planet, which makes it a win-win for everyone.

Sitting Down To Die

New research has tied long hours at your desk with an increase in health risks. Stand up to save your life

Turns out, an active lifestyle simply isn't enough any longer to live a healthy life. In fact, a new study that surveyed more than 12,000 Australians has found that a person who exercises regularly but tends to sit at a desk or watches TV for six hours or more a day, has a similar health risk to someone who doesn't exercise but also does not watch too much TV.

So just how bad are the effects that a sedentary lifestyle can have on your health? Here's a hint: very! For every hour you spend sitting down after you get past your 25th birthday, your life expectancy drops by nearly 22 minutes!

This study led by researchers at the University of Queensland seems to match results generated by another one at the University of Leicester in Great Britain. The British project collected and reviewed data from 18 other studies involving nearly 795,000 people. It found that people with highly sedentary lifestyles had a 112 per cent increase in their relative risk of developing diabetes; a 147 per cent increase in their risk for cardiovascular diseases; and a 49 per cent greater risk of dying prematurely. Alarmingly, these risks stayed the same even if the subjects exercised regularly.

It's long been known that sedenatary jobs are detrimental to health but the literally heart-stopping results of these studies shed new light on the risks.

These numbers present enough reasons for you to change your own lifestyle. Walk around as often as you can at work and at home and don't forget to limit TV watching to the bare minimum. Start walking to the grocery store and sneak in a relaxed after-dinner stroll. Some cardio or weight-training exercise can't hurt either.

Food

CHIPS AHOY!

Potato chips are truly ying-yang when it comes to your body. They definitely taste great but they also silently work to clog up your arteries and add inches to your waistline.

Here are a few healthier alternatives to the old fried potato chip and, as a bonus, we've even added a few healthy seasoning and dipping suggestions.

For best results, use a kitchen tool called a mandoline to help slice your vegetables thinly and evenly. It's also safer to use than a knife and a great time saver. Once sliced, layer your chips in single layers on a baking tray. This ensures that they heat up and cook evenly.

Beetroots These go well with feta or goat cheese. Heat an oven to 175C and bake for 30 minutes

Sweet potatoes They taste great with everything from olive oil to crushed garlic or just salt. Bake for 25 minutes at 200C

Radishes are best when in season. Pair with garlic or pepper. Bake at 175C for 25 minutes.

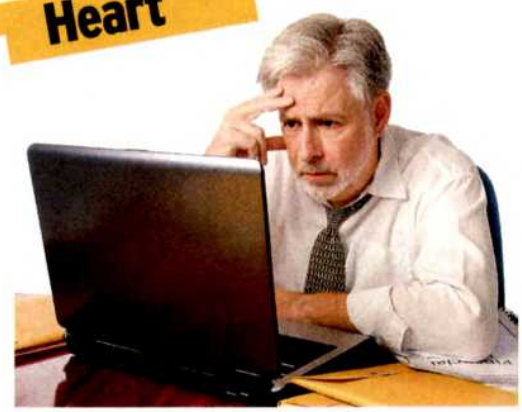
Apples These fruits are super healthy and taste fantastic with a dash of cinamon or allspice. Bake the slices at 100 celsius for about 50 minutes.

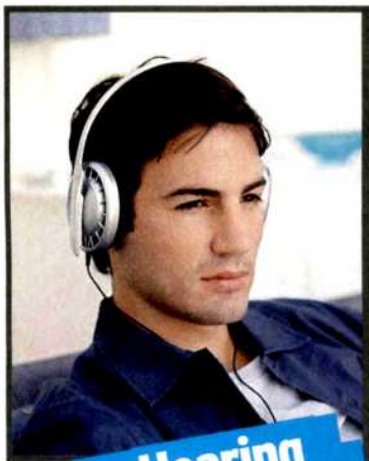
Bananas This old favourite goes well with nutmeg or yogurt mixed with honey. Brush with lemon juice to avoid browning and bake for 90 minutes at 90C.

PRESSURE ON THE BRAIN

Turns out, high blood pressure not only damages your heart, it may even damage your brain. Scientists at the University of California, Davis, found that higher systolic pressure not only hits the structural integrity of the brain but also affects its volume of grey matter. By age 40, they found, the brain of a person with a blood pressure of 140/90 would appear 7 years older than someone whose BP was normal. What's worse, the kind of deterioration the scientists observed is similar not to those in their 60s and 70s but those who are still in their 30s and 40s. The message then from this study is clear. Keep you pressure in check. And watch that salt shaker!

Heart





Hearing

Listen To this Carefully

Listening to music is a pleasure. Don't make it a health hazard with these safety tips.

- Keep the volume at 70 percent. Don't listen to music for more than four hours. If you must wear them longer, lower the volume.
- Buy noise-cancelling headphones so you don't have to turn up the volume.
- On flights, be sure to remove your headphones during take-offs and landings. This is so you can hear the stewards in an emergency.
- Never use headphones while cycling or driving. At higher speeds, you need all the reaction time you can get. Headphones reduce situational awareness and won't allow you time to react.
- If you're running or walking, you should be able to hear footsteps of people around you through the music. They may be trying to warn you.

TRACK & WIELD

WICKED HOUR

Audemars Piguet's 40th anniversary limited-edition Royal Oak embodies the collection's aesthetic codes inspired by diving-suit helmets. Its openworked extra-thin hand-wound movement is fitted with the most emblematic of all complex watch mechanisms, the tourbillon, while its back features a 70-hour power-reserve indication. Price on request

VISION OBSESSION

Here's another example of Diesel's game-changing approach to classic menswear staples. These old-school round-framed sunglasses have been updated by the eponymous label with mesh inserts at the sides and curved titanium arms. They are the epitome of sophistication. Price: ₹10,500

HEAVY METAL

The electric YikeBike can travel about 10 kilometers at 25 kmph on a single charge. A rider sits upright on the 23-pound carbon-fibre frame and steers the bike using its side-mounted handlebars. It also folds up in under 15 seconds and can be easily carried indoors and plugged into standard electrical outlets. Buy it at yikebike.com
Price: $3500 (₹1.89 lakh)

CARRY FORWARD

The textured leather, sturdy look and timeless design of this Paul Smith holdall ensures it will be your travel mate for a long time. The bag features multiple pockets, a detachable shoulder strap, and contrasting hardware for a sophisticated yet practical look on those frequent work trips.
Price on request.

IT'S A WRAP

Etro's luxuriously soft geometric pattern scarf will lend a refined touch to your winter wardobe, whether at work or after hours. Layer this fringed piece over a classic trench coat to keep out the chill on a cold January morning. Price on request.

A PIECE OF PICASSO

Montblanc pays homage to the legendary artist with this 18-carat Pablo Picasso Artisan Edition. The pen is actually shaped more like a pencil with a cap and features a design that the master himself would have almost certainly appreciated. A writing instrument you can produce with flourish at business meetings.
Price: $55,000 (₹29.8 lakh)

EVERYTHING YOU WANT

Asus Taichi is one of the most exciting convertible laptops to hit the market. Lid open, it is a notebook with a full HD screen, Intel Core i7 processor and a backlit keyboard. Lid closed, it is a lightweight tablet with a multi-touch Full-HD screen for intuitive fingertip control on Windows 8. It also features a 5 mp camera, stylus, 4GB RAM, and 256 GB storage. You may be a die-hard Apple fan but this Asus beauty is hard to resist.
Price: Upwards of ₹139,999

SWING ALONG

Philippe Wurtz, the German-based independent clockmaker-transports one back to the age of pendulum clocks with this wall clock. This Brive model is made of a lightweight alloy and has a long power-reserve that requires winding only once every few months. Perfect for those who like to keep with the times. Price on request.

UPGRADE

CENTRE OF ATTENTION

This AAS Gabriel-DaVinciAudio Labs Turntable is as much about function as form. It is a great buy if you have a thing for classics and that well-worn LP sound. It features an arm for each of the four tonal varieties, letting you play jazz, pop, rock, and classical albums one after another without having to switch the needle cartridge. There's also an external belt-drive motor and a magnetically suspended platter that reduces vibrations. The arms have ruby bearings for additional stability, which is supplemented by the AAS Gabriel's 330-pound weight. Buy at www.da-vinci-audio.com Price: starts at $100,000

FOR AUDIOPHILES

JBL Micro Wireless is a pocket-size, speaker featuring a Li-ion rechargeable battery, built-in bass port and wireless bluetooth connection. It can wirelessly stream audio from your portable devices like smartphones and tablets, for five continuous hours. Smart listening. Price: ₹3,500 each

OUTDOOR READY

Bottega Veneta is known for its impeccable leather craftsmanship. Consider this casual varsity jacket. Lightweight and tactile, it is a comfortable extra layer when the temperature dips, especially when travelling overseas this season. The contrasting colours add oomph to it.
Price: £4,170 (₹3.62 lakh)

RUNNING ON THE CLOUDS

Nike returns with its max air-cushioned flagship silhouette this year with Nike Air Max+ 2013. This low-top trainer offers flexible, soft and lightweight cushioning while an open hole mesh on the upper serves allows for increased ventilation and comfort while on the run. Bust that work stress! Price: ₹12,995

HAUTE HOOP

This elegant suede, calf leather belt by Louis Vuitton is embossed with the marquee's historic Damier pattern. Crafted from finest leather, this belt is a classically stylish choice for off-duty dressing.
Price on request

SHOOT TO THRILL

The Samsung Galaxy GC100 camera features a 16.3-megapixel backside-illuminated CMOS sensor that shoots 4,608x3,456-pixel images, a 21x zoom lens, and 4.8-inch screen display. It runs on Android JellyBean, so you can download apps, get connected to the internet and share images on the go. For those who think smart. Price: ₹29,850

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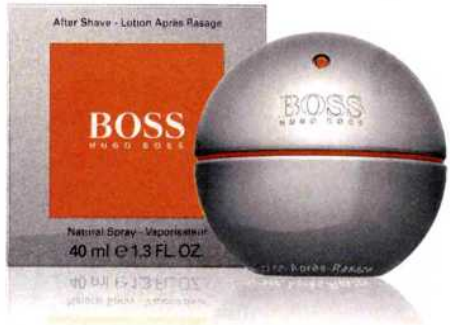


MIND SPACE

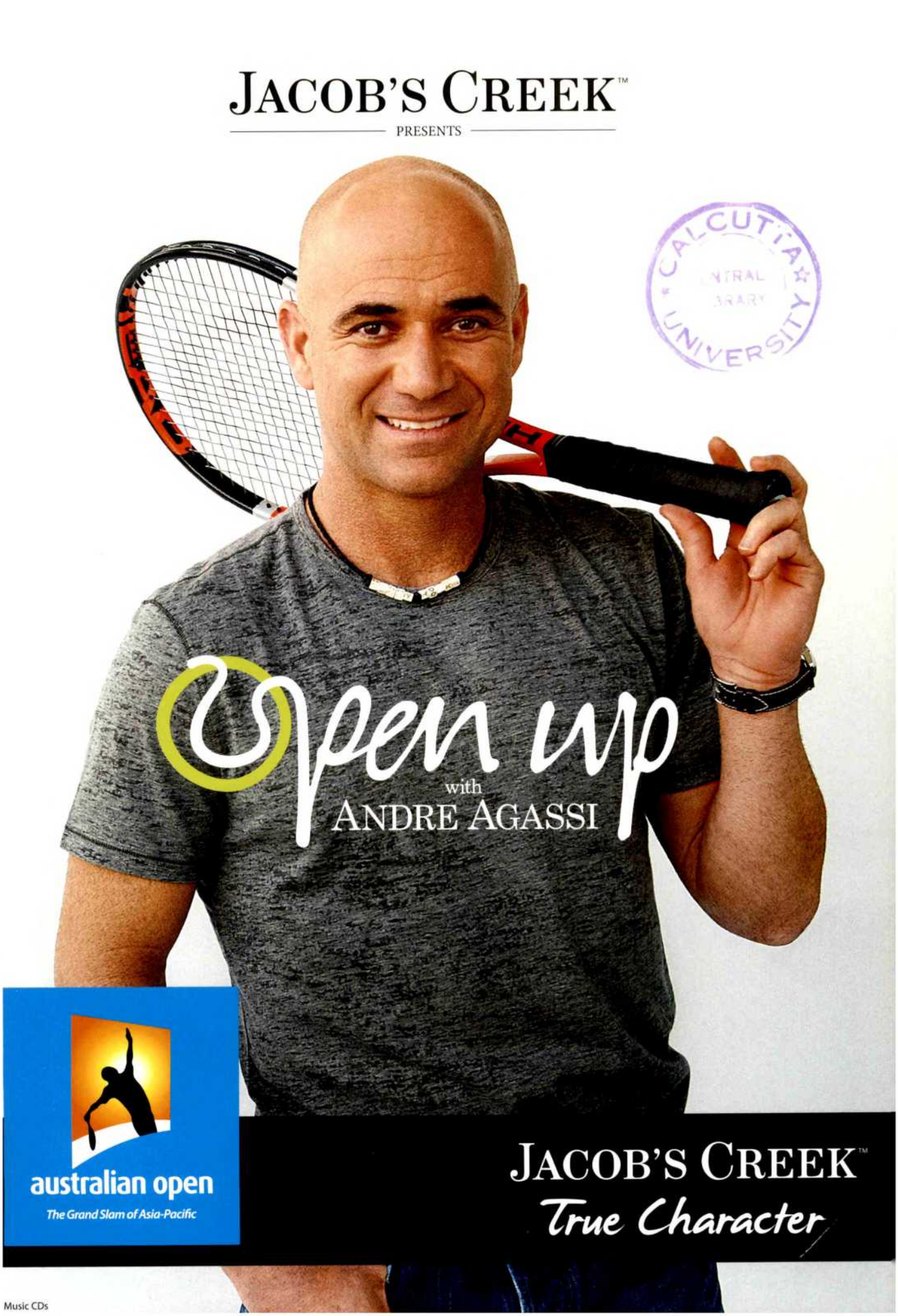
Books I am hooked to fiction **Magazines** India Today and Time
Music R&B and Bollywood **Websites** espn.com, cnn.com

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Drives Audi A6 **Entertainment System** I enjoy watching adventure shows on my Samsung TV **Pets** Trixy, my shihtzu

MY FAVOURITE THINGS

Gadget Love A victorinox Swiss knife **Handheld** iPhone 4S
Stereo Bang & Olufsen **Work Station Rules** I am environmentally conscious and digitally driven, so all updates are marked on my iPad.



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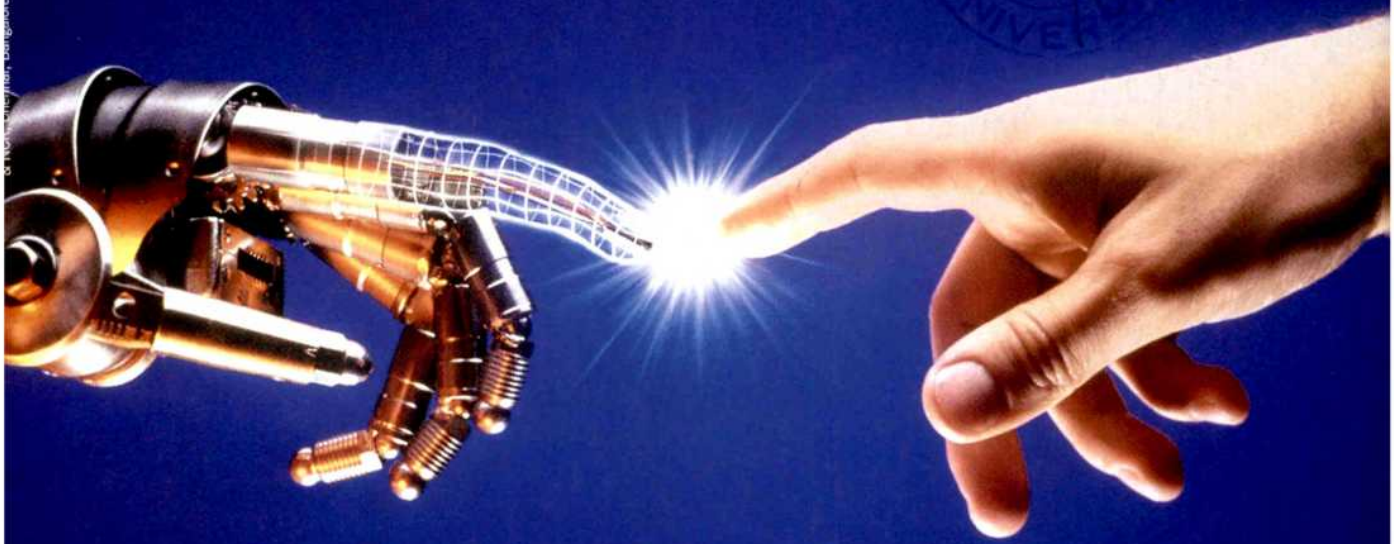

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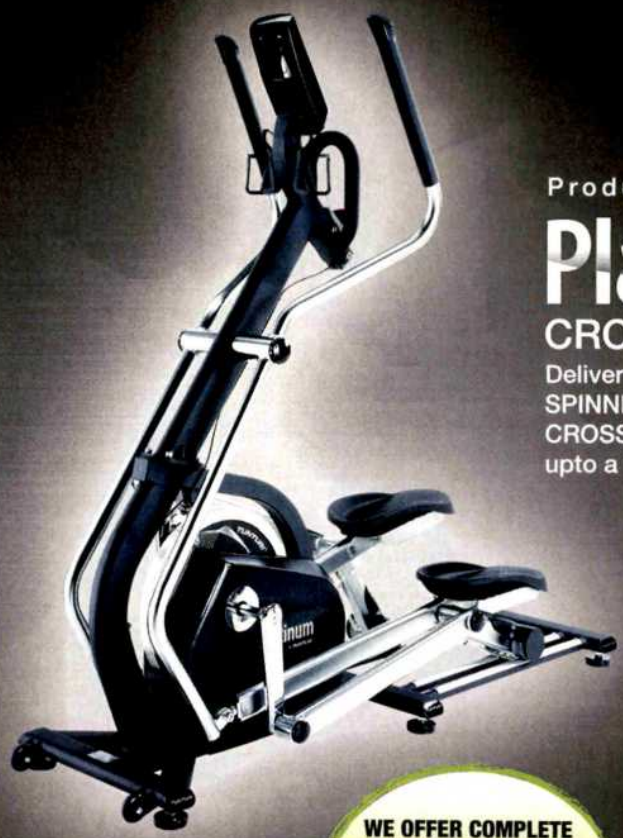

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Gadget Care On The Go

Rohit Chaudhary, founder and CEO, eTechies.in, gives tips on how to keep your gadgets in mint condition

If technology rules your universe and your life is dictated by smart gadgets, here's how you can keep them running smooth even as you are on the move.

MINIMUM EXPOSURE

Make sure you don't leave them in direct sunlight and areas with high humidity or dust. If you decide to show up at the beach with the laptop, make sure the waterproof screen guard and a thin film keypad cover is on at all times.

BAG 'EM UP

Keep your electronic devices in protective carry cases to prevent scratches or breakage. Make sure the foam isn't ruptured from anywhere and there's cushioning even if the cases and sleeves are manhandled at airports as they often are.

COME CLEAN

Never use home cleaning solutions to clean your device screens. These might leave a blot or a moisture patch on them forever. Instead, use the chemical cleaning solutions available at electronic outlets. Use a lint-free cloth or anti static wipe. Put together a cleaning kit before you head out.

KEEP IT COOL

Every gadget has a ventilation mesh which usually releases warm air and heats up quick. Make sure this window isn't covered, even while the gadget is on sleep mode and in its case.

SHUT DOWN IN TIME

Gadgets must never be shut down by any other method except through the 'shut down' option provided. This exerts pressure on the battery. So, make sure you install updates and do the step wise shut down before packing up.

CHARGED UP

It is advisable to always charge your devices fully to ensure the longest possible run-time. Even if your gadget is a multi-voltage one, take note of the native voltage and carry the appropriate transformer.

ON THE SAFE SIDE

If you carry many gadgets with you, there's always a risk of leaving one of them behind, so make sure they are password protected and install and sync device tracking applications.

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PICK UP SPEED

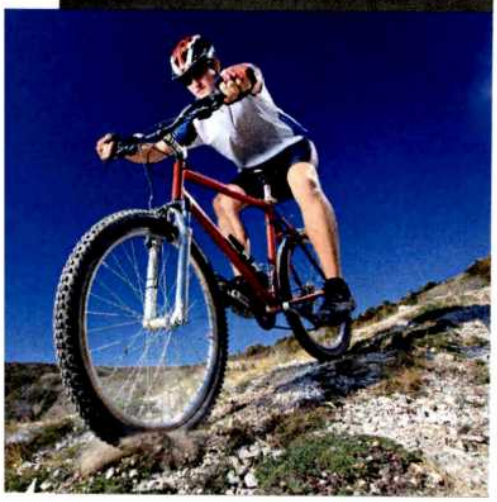
Cycling, Running and Swimming—the three -fold rule book for any firness enthusiast. But is a daily work-out good enough? The stress levels are soaring and a competitive edge to your regimen challenges and rejuvenates the body and mind. Here are a few handy tips to improve your cycling speed and peddle your way to improved endurance.

The Technique

Two words: Interval Training. Implement a series of high-speed sprints, followed by an active recovery at lower speeds in between. To avoid rupturing muscles, begin with a warm up of 10 minutes of peddling at a steady speed of 10km per hour. Next, take a breather of one minute and begin your high speed sprint of 25km per hour. Follow this up with a three minute low speed sprint. Do three sets of the routine with 10-minute intervals.

Quick Tips

Be realistic and set smaller goals like 50km every month and increase your speed by one mile an hour. Pin a heart rate monitor to know exactly how much you've exerted and how much more pressure you can handle. A chocolate flavoured protein shake and a post-workout power nap refreshes and enhances the effect.



The Social Network

Shital Kakkar Mehra, founder, Soft Skills International feels striking a fine balance between listening and speaking is critical for leveraging business deals.

COMMUNICATE WELL

If people frequently tell you "I don't understand" it's time to evaluate your speaking skills. Do you dictate, sound patronising or talk too fast? Remember, it's not just what you say but how you say it that also matters. A patient and intent listener always commands respect. Most people don't focus well on listening; instead they just wait to speak. By displaying good listening skills, you build trust and show interest. Asking relevant questions, using positive gestures (eye contact, nodding, smiling) and picking up the thread of the conversation, makes you come across as actively engaged.

DIALOGUE IS A TWO-WAY STREET

Conversation, like a game of tennis, is a two-way process. Use it to extract others' opinions and not just as a tool for telling them yours. Consider the pauses and short silences at business meetings as a time to think and respond.

INVOLVE EVERYONE

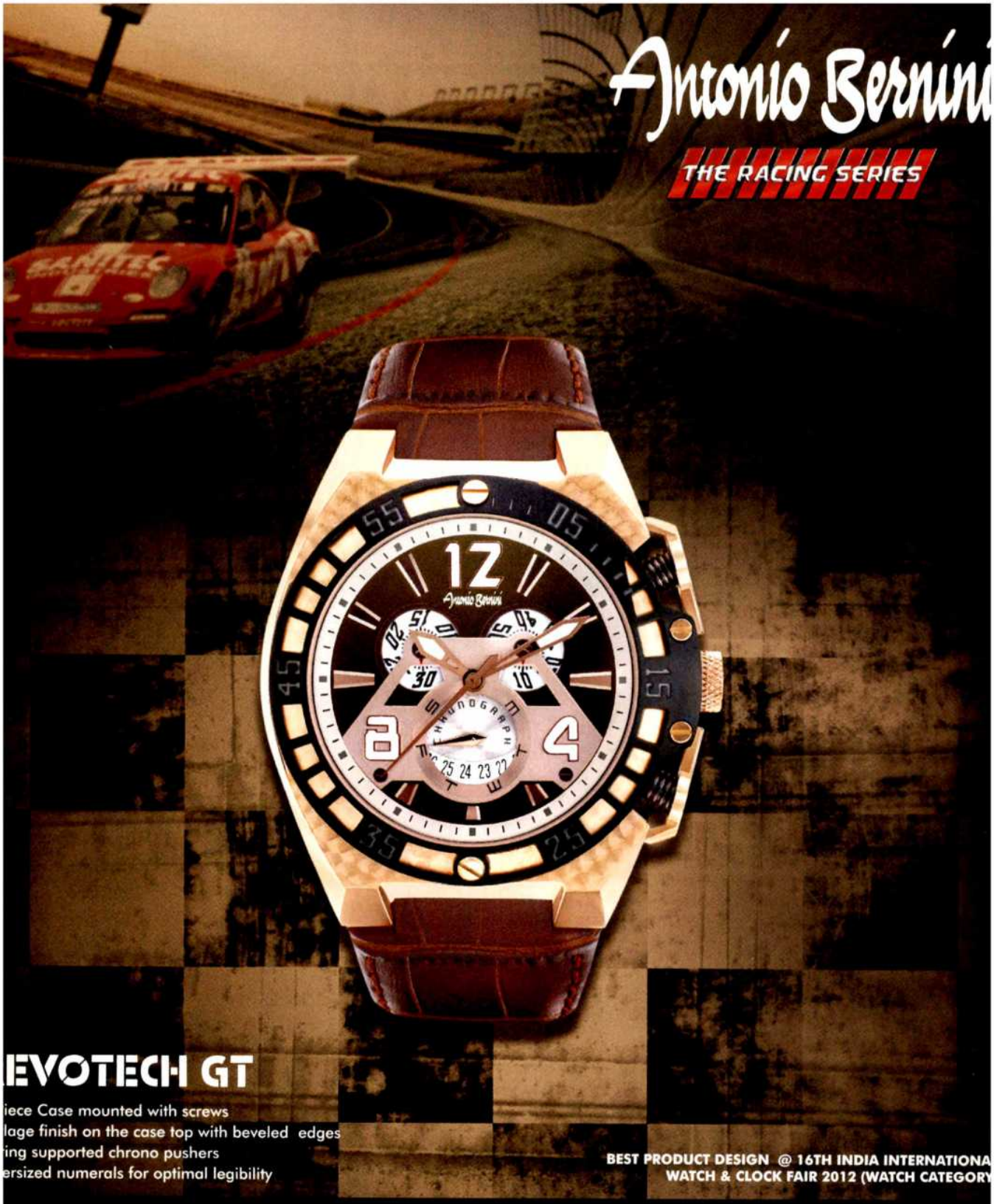
Extroverts have natural flair for conducting conversation but the real skill lies in including the quieter ones, who may be struggling to get their point across but do have valuable views to contribute.

AGREE TO DISAGREE

Respect the fact that people have differing opinions, which makes conversation interesting and lively. Accept gracefully saying, "That's an interesting perspective and you may be right."

A TOUCH OF TACT

Change the subject, which at times maybe needed to retain focus or to deflect to neutral territory. Steer smartly during a break in the conversation but if the break doesn't come, interject saying, "Tell me more about ..." or "Getting back to..."



TCHES AND MORE: ANDHERI, INFINITI MALL, 26338132; BREACH CANDY, CYMROZA ART GALLERY, 23646540; LOWER PAREL, HIGH STREET PHOENI
978605; MALAD, INFINITI MALL,28446540 ; THANE, KORUM MALL 25395612.

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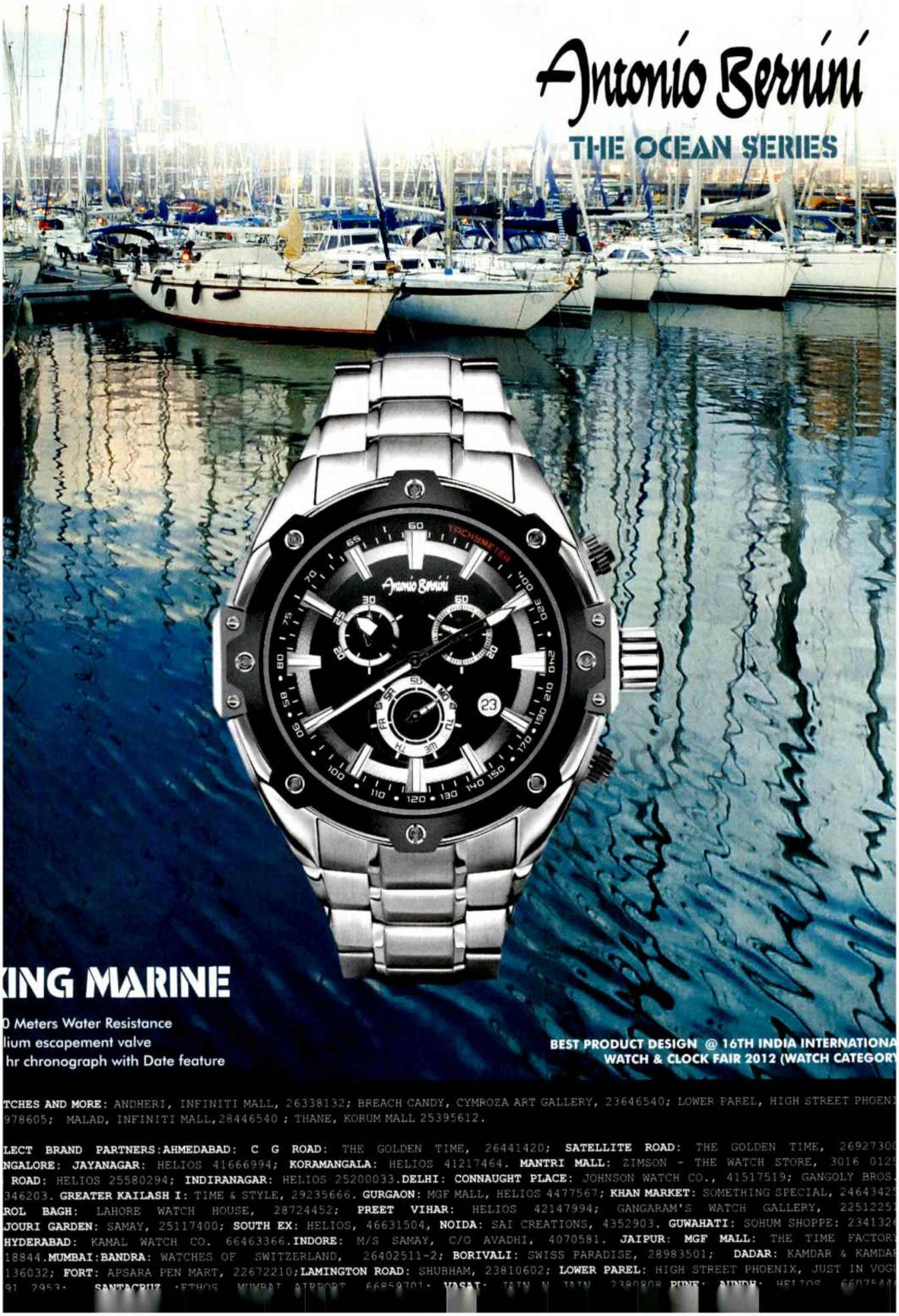
Culture And The City

Londonderry defeats Birmingham, Sheffield and Norwich to become the UK's first Capital of Culture for 2013.

The Untied Kingdom has been on a roll and how. Given its popularity for business, it is only fitting that there be an equal emphasis on after hours. After 2012 (the year of the London Olympics), they're ready to bring on the fireworks with their Capital of Culture, 2013. Londonderry, the second largest city in North Ireland, has been coined the cultural powerhouse of the year with a powerpacked roster of cultural highlights including contemporary music and dance festivals, an international festival of visual arts and other exciting events through the year. The New Year was ushered in with a special Sons and Daughters of Derry concert, and Frank Cottrell Boyce, who scripted the opening ceremony of the London Olympic is slated to exucute a three-day performance based on Colmcille, the warrior monk who founded the city. Other events down the line include a special gala performance by The Royal Ballet, the world premier of composer Mark-Anthony Turnage's new cantata presented by The London Symphony Orchestra, and additional performances by John Williams, including his scores from *Star Wars* and *Schindler's List*. Visually, the city's walls will serve as a canvas for art group Lumiere, who will transform it with a special light show. World famous comedians Jimmy Carr and Tommy Tiernan will draw in the laughs by taking to the stage, and BBC Radio 1 will station a base to carry out lkive broadcasts. Furthermore, the Turner Prize will be held in the former barracks on Ebrington Square. Not only is the occasion a fantastic cultural upliftment for Derry, it has also served as a unifier, bringing together the city's nationalists and unionists as the communities came together to win the honour. Bringing about 3,000 jobs to the city, this year will give it a much-needed boost and is recommended for a quick cultural fix.

Preserving the Sistine Chapel

If the rigorous screening process at airports makes you grimace, your next visit to the Sistine Chapel will make it seem like cakewalk. The five million tourists who visit Rome to see the Sistine Chapel every year, will now be subject to vacuum cleaning and chilling before being granted entry. In an effort to reduce the threat of pollution to Michelangelo's frescoes, the team at the Vatican museumshas installed stringent measures to preserve the intricate artwork. The entrance is to be covered with a carpet to clean shoes; suction vents on the sides will suck dust from clothes; and the air will be maintained at low temperatures. The heat and dirt generated by 20,000 tourists on a daily basis has attributed to the layers of grime accumulating on the paintings and authorities decided it was time to do something about it.



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THE END OF AN ERA

Lamborghini CEO Stephan Winkelmann has predicted that the global demand for ultra-luxury sports cars will fall this year, owing to the continuing European debt crisis and the slowdown of the Chinese economy. But their loss seems to be our gain. To compensate for falling sales in Europe and China, Lamborghini is now looking to expand in Asian markets and has opened a second dealership in India, where the number of millionaires are expected to more than double by 2015. Another big announcement from the house of Lamborghini is its decision to cease production of its V10 Gallardo. Credited with reviving the brand after it was sold to the Volkswagen Group in 1998, the iconic Gallardo went on sale in 2003, racking up over 10,000 sales and making it the most popular Lamborghini of all time. It was on the streets, and extensively covered by popular media (even Akon rapped about it). Although the model is as good as any of its contemporaries in terms of power and looks, the decision to discontinue production came after its Italian makers felt it was lagging in terms of technology. With a replacement already waiting in the wings, watch out for the new kid on the block.

FOOD TRENDS IN 2013

The Americans set the bar, and the world follows suit. Resulting from serious amounts of research, the Food & Beverage Specialty Team of MSLGROUP have summed up emerging trends in the food industry; here's the latest you need to get in on. Coffee's going to go stronger than ever being the highest source of antioxidants, preserved foods like cured, brined, pickled and fermented items will be lining the shelves and served at finedining establishgments, healthier varieties of fats and natural no-calorie sweeteners like monk fruit will replace without altering taste. Boxed wine will soon be stocked alongside a six-pack of beer with all major winemakers joining in the race, and with consumers demanding their right to know, transparent food labeling will be the norm. An explosion of protein-fortified bars, beverages and salty snacks will serve as nutritious supplements for those with no time for a sit-down, bitter flavours will dominate the palate in stores and on menus, and finedining will take a hit to make place for gourmet street food.

ALL ABOARD

The *RMS Queen Elizabeth II* cruiseship will be given a second lease of life after being transformed into a floating hotel by its owners in Dubai. The ship, which was built for Cunard and operated for nearly 40 years, made her maiden voyage in 1969. At 70,327 tons, and stretching 963 feet long with a top speed of 32.5 knots she was undeniably one of the fastest and grandest passenger vessels ever built. Due to be adapted into a floating 300-room hotel with its original furnishings intact, the ship will remain in the city state's downtown Port Rashid facility and serve as a tourist magnet alongside a proposed maritime museum and an expanding cruise ship terminal complex.

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Former world no. 1 Tiger Woods and current no. 1 Rory McIlroy brought the focus on golf in Turkey like never before when they played against each other at the Turkish Airlines World Golf Final in Belek, Antalya.

Tee off in Turkey

If you're looking for the ideal golfing getaway, head to Turkey's rich Antalya region for a perfect round. Who knows, you could strike the perfect business deal as well!

BY PIERRE MARIO FITTER

Thwaaaack!" Tiger Woods was all business. His opponent Charl Schwartzel watched nervously as the ball sailed towards the greens. Ten minutes later, Woods sank a birdie for a two-shot lead over the South African. It was the opening round of the World Golf Final in Belek. Woods had started well.

On the drive over from Antalya airport, it's hard to miss Belek's ties to golf. It took just 20 minutes to drive through town. In that time, we passed 15 (yes, that many!) golf courses and resorts. Four more, we were told, would be ready by 2014; the farthest, a mere 15 minutes outside of town. Belek's superlative facilities and infrastructure attracted eight of the world's top golfers here last October. No doubt, the $5.2 million prize purse (and at least that much in additional appearance fees) helped a bit.

Back at the Antalya Golf Club, Woods had fallen behind. A triple-bogey on the ninth hole gave Schwartzel a two-stroke lead. Not far away, the current world no. 1, Rory McIlroy, was doing better. He was 1-under by the 9th hole. Unfortunately, his opponent Matt Kuchar, was 3-under. Woods and McIlroy would meet in two days—their first-ever competitive match. It seems as if every golf fan in Europe had descended on Belek to watch them.

For a small town, Belek doesn't just have an abundance of golf courses. It's blessed with an abundance of courses designed by golf's biggest names. Take the 27-hole Nick Faldo Golf course at the Cornelia Resort. Guests enjoy top-class facilities at a 5-star, 4,800 square metre club house. They can also take in a lesson at the on-site academy managed by the 30-year veteran David Leadbetter. His students have won more than a dozen Majors and over 100 individual tournaments.

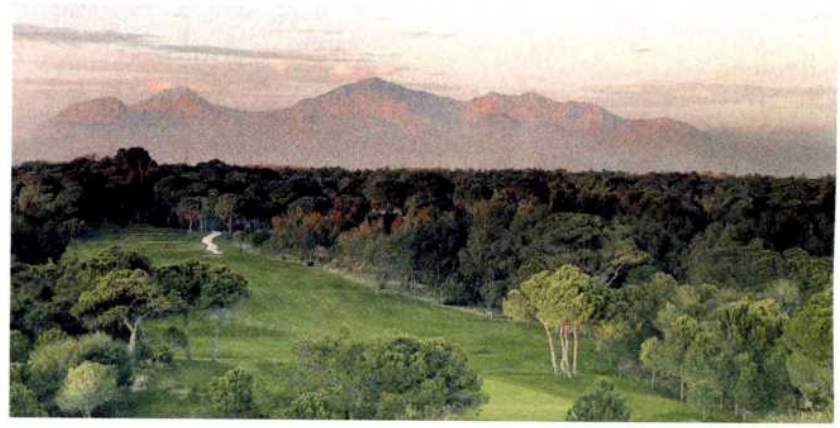
Less than a mile away, is the Montgomerie Maxx Royal, designed by Colin Montgomerie. This 6,486 metre course is set amidst 104 acres of natural pine forest. If that isn't good enough, the hotel itself features stunning 'villas on the water', where you can wake up to the Mediterranean Sea.

Besides these, Belek is home to a number of other top-rated courses. The Gloria Golf club is designed by French expert Micahel Gayon. It's framed by the stunning Taurus mountains in the backdrop. Uniquely, its practise range consists of a pond with islands that form the target greens. The Antalya Golf Club, where the

The uniquely designed Sueno Golf Resort is located in Belek. It's stunning surroundings hold 18-hole golf courses, basketball, volleyball and tennis courts, three football fields, a cinema and a spa (above). Turkey's Taurus mountains create a dramatic backdrop for an evening game as the sun sets across the Mediterranean (below).

World Golf Finals was held, and the nearby Sueno Golf Club both have two 18-hole courses.

Back at the action, Woods and McIlroy had both lost their first round but the former champion came back strongly to take his second game against Matt Kuchar. McIlroy however, settled for a 1-stroke loss to Schwartzel. That set up an exciting final. Unfortunately, a heavy lightning storm forced anxious fans to wait another day for the match. When the duo finally took to the greens, a crowd in its thousands surged behind them. Woods won 64-70, sending the world number 1 crashing out of the competition without a win. Justin Rose, would eventually pocket the $1.5 million prize. Woods took home $600,000 while McIlroy, for all his disappointments, still earned $300,000.



The best part about Belek is that it sits in one of Turkey's most tourist-friendly regions. If your family doesn't enjoy golf, Antalya's beaches, historical Roman ruins at Side, Perge and Aspendos and the balmy Mediterranean weather all year round, will definitely win them over. That makes Belek ideal not just for golfing getaways or business offsites, but for family vacations as well.

What's more, specialist travel agents are more than happy to do the planing for you. Oner Uygun, the managing director at Millennium Golf in Belek, organises all golf course and hotel reservations, golf lessons, luxury transfers and car hires. He even organises shuttle and guide services for non-golfers who want to take in Antalya's other attractions.

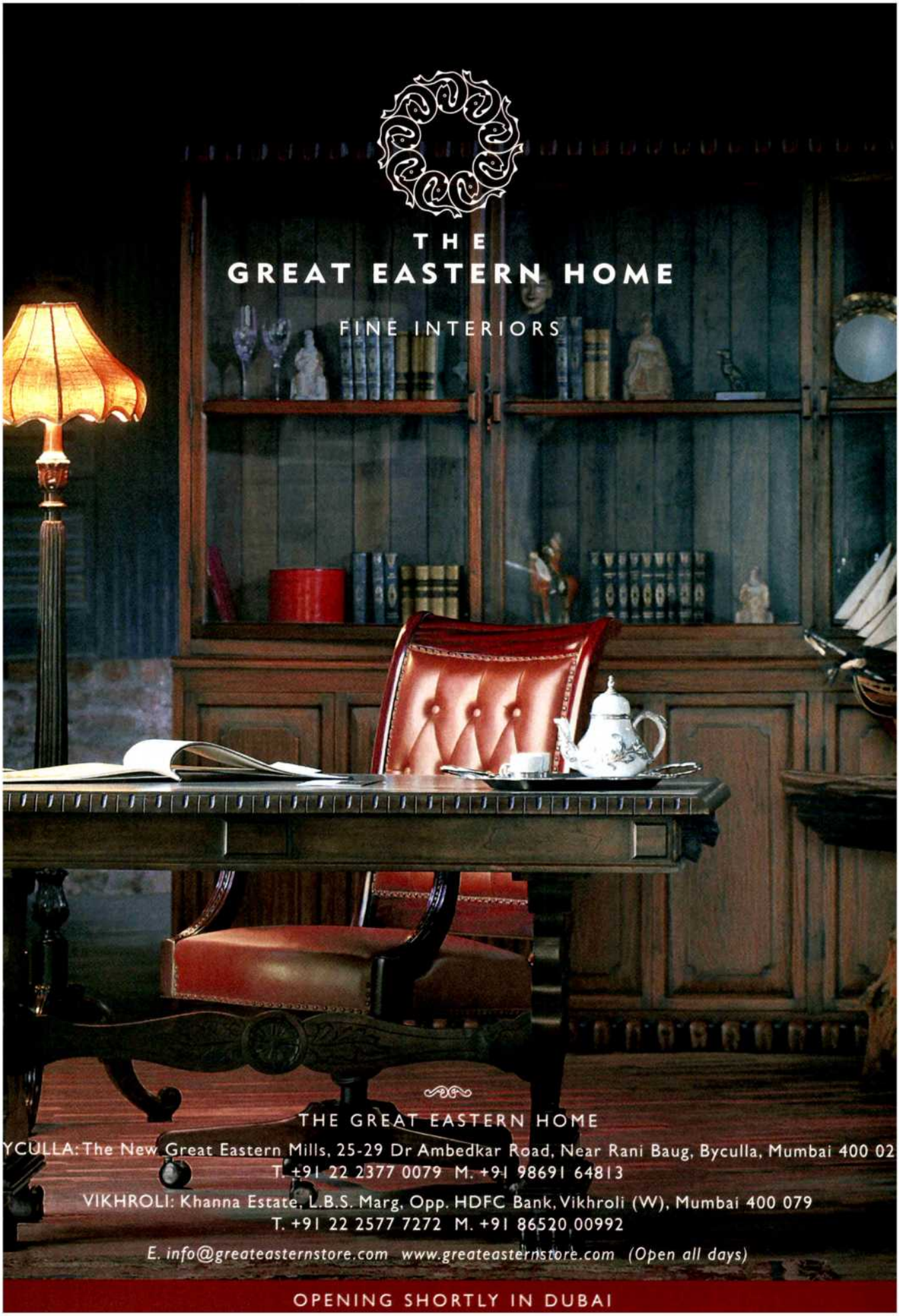
It's no wonder then, that Belek was voted Europe's number one golfing destination in 2008. Just six hours from India, it is one golf capital you don't want to miss. ■

The Guide

GETTING THERE
Turkish Airlines flies from Mumbai and Delhi. Passengers can carry golf kits for free in addition to their regular luggage allowance.

WHERE TO STAY*
Sueno Golf Resort from ₹73,000
Maxx Royal from ₹57,000
Gloria Golf Resort from ₹35,000

WHAT TO DO
Book a round of golf with Millennium Golf (Millenniumgolf.com.tr/) or visit nearby historical sites such as Perge, Aspendos and Side.
*Twin-room + all meals and select beverages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OPENING SHORTLY IN DUBAI

Wizards of Sound

Bang & Olufsen open the doors to their high-tech factory. We find out what's behind their stunning audio systems.

BY AASHMITA NAYAR

The charm of a magical act is in its illusion. Knowing the secret behind the sleight of a magician's hand destroys that illusion and with it, the charm of the act. Yet, in a small corner of Denmark, a small team of magicians are constantly conjuring up magical objects, without much thought about the illusion. Their belief in their kind of magic is absolute and they call themselves Bang & Olufsen.

"Magic means giving our audience something they cannot get anywhere else in the way the product looks, feels, sounds or in the way it surprises," says Tue Mantoni, B&O's CEO. So, they've swirled their wands to put orchestras in cars. Televisions swivel, remotes are reinvented and speakers read spaces to envelope the listener in beautifully engineered sound.

B&O's Scandinavian sensibilities inspire sharp, honest designs that are stripped of all frills. If it looks like aluminium, it is aluminium, not plastic. "There are no gimmicks or decorations that distract," says Mantoni.

The minimalist design is apparent on entering the ultramodern Danish headquarters. A magnificent, yet simple construction of glass, stone and wood, 'The Farm' as it is known is a throwback to when Peter Bang and Svend Olufsen started out by tinkering with electronics in the attic of the latter's farmhouse at Quistrup in 1925. Bang was the technical brains while Olufsen managed logistics and business. They survived initially on the money Olufsen's mother earned by selling farm eggs.

By 1927, the duo established headquarters at Struer and started raising unmatched pedestals for innovation. While all other radios ran on batteries, their first product, the B&O 5 Lamper, was

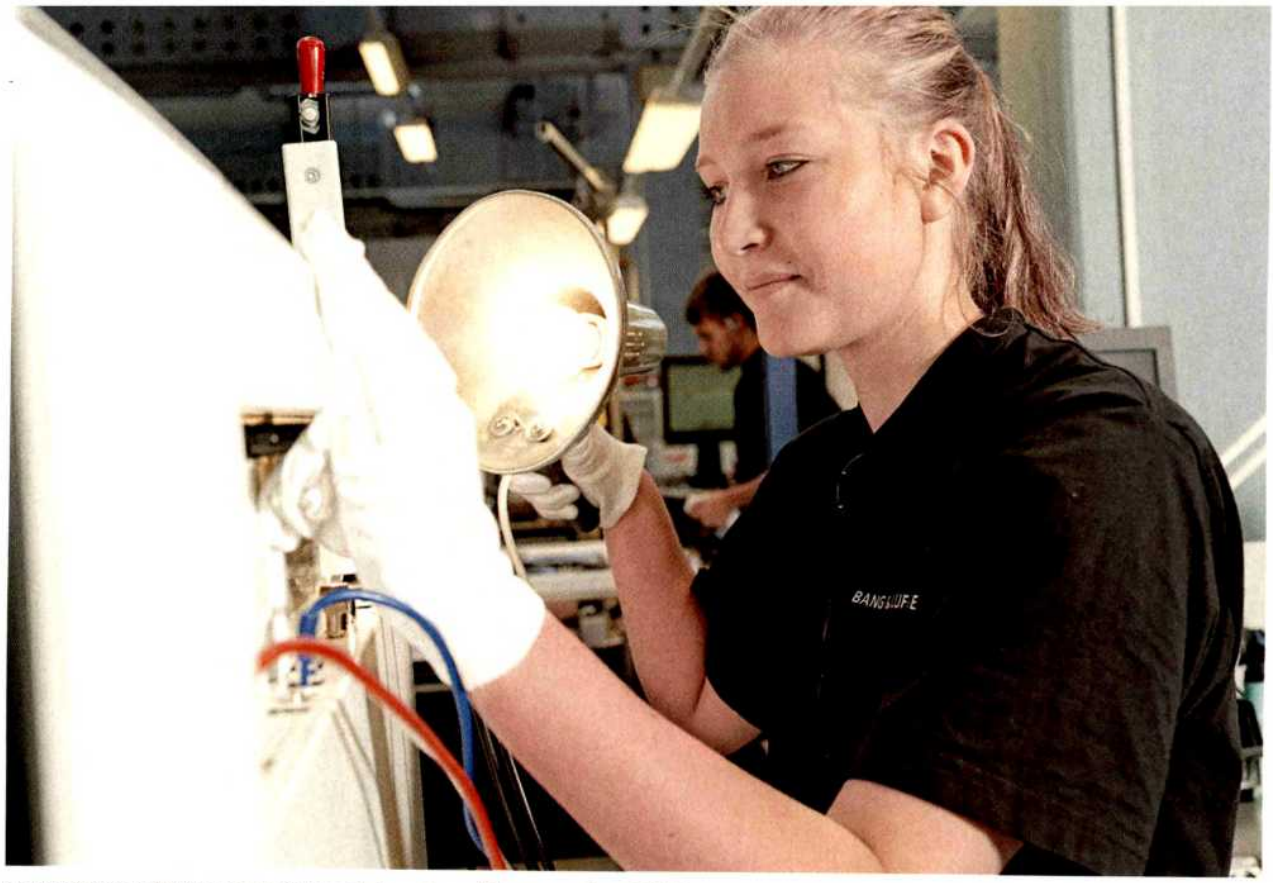
The top-of-the-line B&O BeoLab 5 speaker being prepared for testing

BEOLIT 12
Portable music player speaker dock
₹67,800

BEOLAB 5
Hi-fi speakers
₹8.72 lakh

BEOPLAY V1
32-inch LCD TV (₹1.63 lakh)
40-inch LCD TV (₹1.90 lakh)

BEOPLAY A3
iPad dock
₹65,300



A B&O technician at the Struer factory in Denmark, inspects one of the company's new LCD TVs.

powered directly from the mains.

Today, Olufsen's nephew Peter Skak Olufsen and his family still live at Quistrup Manor. He recalls their love for all things electric. "When I was seven, I wanted an electric train for Christmas," reminisces Peter. He got one, but could only play with it the next morning after his father, Svend Olufsen, and Peter Bang had tinkered with it all through the night.

B&O WOULD RATHER PERSIST WITH A WELL-MADE, OLDER PRODUCT THAN RISK A NEW ONE THAT WON'T PERFORM

In the sunlit hall of their headquarters, musical notes trickle out of what appears to be an iPad encased in a thin pyramid. A closer inspection reveals three tweeters and a woofer hidden in its sides. This is the BeoPlay A3, the latest magical device from the B&O Play line of products.

The company has moved on from integrated systems to wireless products. "It appeals to people who would like to buy a quality product, but may not have the commitment to invest in fully integrated system," says Mantoni. Indeed their statistics show 60 to 70 per cent of people who buy a B&O Play device have never bought a full-scale B&O system.

B&O entered the television business one year after Svend's death in 1949. Recently, they hired a psychologist who reported, after studying people, that excellent sound systems gave the impression of watching a bigger screen. "It's how we re-devised our perceptions of making televisions," says Mantoni.

B&O's other big bet is the auto market, which contributes one-sixth of its revenues. When they scouted the Paris Motor Show in 2001, they were surprised to find poor-quality, yet expensive audio systems in luxury cars. "We thought this was a bit strange as we were developing speakers for $50,000 for homes," says Jens Peter Zinck, vice-president of the automotive division.

B&O's $7,400 price tag was rejected by nearly every car executive except Dr Martin Winterkorn of Audi. He ordered B&O's acoustic lens technology—which created a 'sweet spot' for sound throughout the car—for the A8. Since then, Mercedes AMG, BMW and Aston Martin have all signed up.

When it comes to luxury, Mantoni believes US and Asian markets will earn far more revenues for B&O than Europe. The concept of luxury is changing and growing," he says.

In spite of the fleeting life technology lives, the company's classic designs and futuristic thinking require little or no change. The logo, for example, hasn't changed since 1932, when Svend Olufsen paid a painter's apprentice 10 Danish Kroners for the design.

However, even as B&O's technology changes direction, one belief will evade transience. Its magicians will always ensure that an little bit of magic lingers in each B&O artefact. ■

QATAR AIRWAYS ANNOUNCES CHICAGO AS NEWEST USA ROUTE

World's Best Airline To Begin Services To 'The Windy City' In April 2013

Qatar Airways announces an expansion of its USA route network with the introduction of daily passenger flights to Chicago from April 10 this year.

The non-stop service from Doha, capital of the State of Qatar, will be the carrier's fourth USA gateway, following already successful daily operations to New York (JFK), Washington (IAD) and Houston (IAH). The carrier, which already operates twice-weekly cargo flights to Chicago O'Hare, will use its flagship long-haul Boeing 777-300 Extended Range passenger aircraft on the Doha – Chicago route with an approximate flying time of 15 hours.

Qatar Airways' expansion to Chicago O'Hare, the world's second busiest airport handling 70 million passengers a year, has long been earmarked by the airline as a key traffic route that would appeal to travellers from across its passenger network.

Qatar Airways CEO Akbar Al Baker said: "As Qatar Airways continues its aggressive expansion, we are pleased to finally offer another gateway in the United States, this time to the 'The Windy City' of Chicago, five years after we began operations to North America.

"Chicago is a key route for business and leisure travellers alike, connecting them from destinations across India, Africa, Middle East and Asia Pacific with a one-stop service via Doha to the Midwest."

Qatar Airways' Boeing 777 aircraft operating on the Chicago route will feature 335 seats in a two-class configuration of 42 Business Class seats and 293 in Economy. Business Class, configured in a spacious 2–2–2 layout, features seats that convert into fully-flat horizontal beds, 17 inch individual TV monitors and an award-winning dining experience.

Regardless of class of travel, every passenger has a wide choice of personal inflight entertainment options through their audio video entertainment system of over 1,000 programmes and movies.

Qatar Airways, one of the world's fastest growing airlines, has seen rapid growth in just 15 years of operations, currently flying a modern fleet of 110 aircraft to 118 key business and leisure destinations across Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia Pacific, North America and South America.

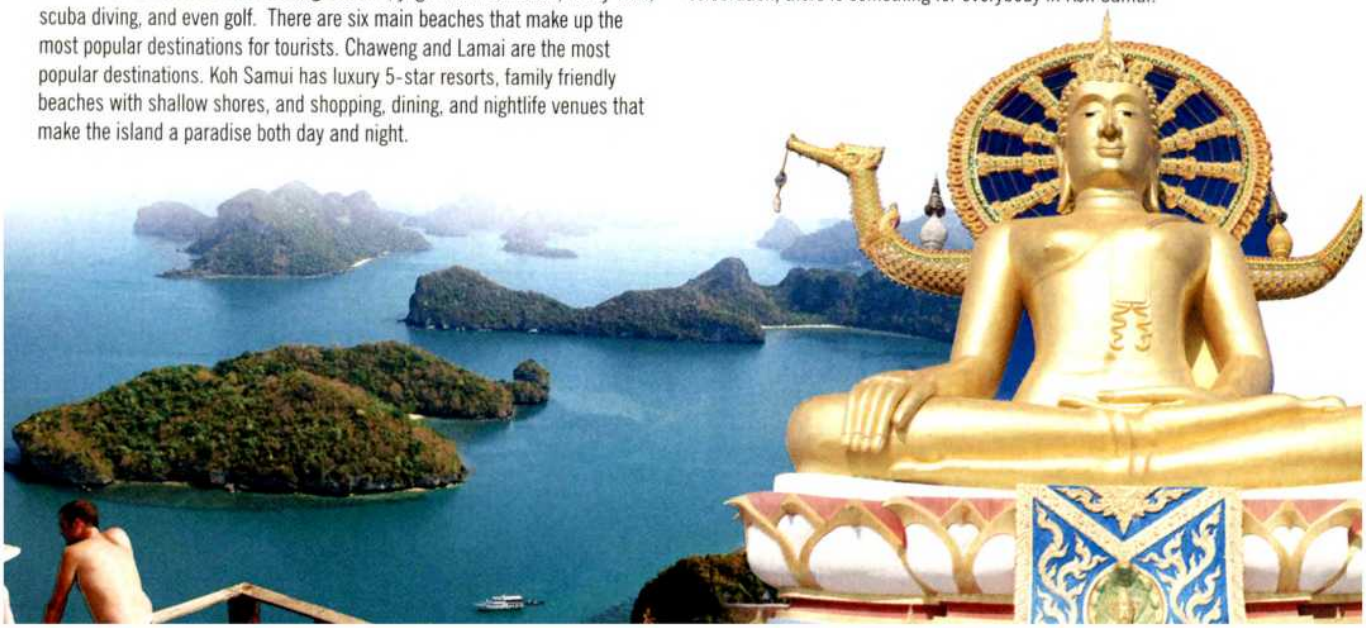
www.qatarairways.com

KOH SAMUI: A PARADISE ISLAND THAT OFFERS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

Koh Samui is the premier island destination in the Gulf of Thailand and the largest in an archipelago of more than 80 islands that includes the Ang Thong National Marine Park, a kayaking paradise and top day trip from Koh Samui. Koh Samui can be reached by Bangkok Airways or Thai Airways from Suvarnabhumi Airport to Samui, a Boutique Airport.

Koh Samui features spectacular beaches, outstanding dining, and a variety of activities that includes Thai cooking Classes, yoga and meditation, Muay Thai, scuba diving, and even golf. There are six main beaches that make up the most popular destinations for tourists. Chaweng and Lamai are the most popular destinations. Koh Samui has luxury 5-star resorts, family friendly beaches with shallow shores, and shopping, dining, and nightlife venues that make the island a paradise both day and night.

Besides the activities, Koh Samui is also becoming a popular place for weddings and other celebrations, a romantic getaway and a perfect honeymoon destination for travellers from India, due to the fact that the paradise island offers breathtaking beaches, tranquil waters, green tropical landscapes and coconut palms backdrop combined with Thai Hospitality. Koh Samui is the ultimate paradise-the perfect place for a quiet vacation or a celebration, there is something for everybody in Koh Samui!



Tech & You

WORDS & STYLING: **HITANI KAUR**
PHOTOS: **VIVAN MEHRA AND SHEKHAR GHOSH**
MODEL: **UDIT OHRI**

LOCATION: **DIPLOMAT SUITE, REGENCY CLUB LOUNGE, HYATT REGENCY, NEW DELHI**

JABRA DRIVE BLUETOOTH CAR SPEAKER This bluetooth version 3.0 pairs with devices such as a smartphone, laptop, tablet, or MP3 player. With a battery talk time up to 20 hours and stand by time of up to 720 hours, it's a great buy.
₹4,800

DELL XPS 12 LAPTOP With a third generation Intel Core i5 processor, Windows 8 operating system, 4GB dual channel memory and 12.5-inch LED backlit touch display, this makes for a great work companion.
₹89,990

AT HOME

UDIT IS WEARING A SHIRT BY SAND XO; TIE BY CANALI; PANTS BY VERSACE; SHOES BY TOD'S; WATCH BY TAG HEUER (CARRERA CALIBRE 1887).

GO THROUGH 24-HOURS WITH THE HELP OF A MIXED BAG OF GIZMOS AND ACCESSORIES THAT SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE. FROM A GADGET THAT GIVES YOU THE PERFECT COFFEE IN THE MORNING, TO ESSENTIAL WORK TECH, AT-HOME FITNESS ASSISTANTS AND THE VERY BEST IN HOME ENTERTAINMENT, THERE'S A GADGET TO MATCH EVERY WHIM AND MOOD. *BT MORE* TAKES OFF THE BUBBLEWRAP AND STOCKS YOUR HOME AND WORKSPACE WITH THE BEST.

BOSE SOUNDLINK BLUETOOTH MOBILE SPEAKER
This portable, sleek bluetooth speaker with 3.5mm auxiliary input, a micro-USB port, wireless range up to 30 feet, and battery life up to 8 hours gets the thumbs up.
₹19,013

FRANCIS FRANCIS Y1 IPERESPRESSO MACHINE 6600
Pour yourself a cup of yummy coffee using this sturdy aluminum encased machine with a tempered glass cup holder. Pump pressure: 19 bars. It features automatic ejection of used capsules into a side compartment and also sports a height-adjustable cup drip tray.
₹11,991

HERMAN MILLER SAYL CHAIR
The ergonomic design pays attention to the transition areas, from the thoracic to the lumbar areas, and between the lumbar area and sacrum. A frameless back provides maximum movement.
Price on request

HTC ONE X+
Equipped with a new, faster Quad Core processor and more RAM. HTC VideoPic you can shoot video and audio simultaneously.
₹40,190

BENQ W0170 PROJECTOR
Full HD video projects a 200-inch screen in multiple 3D forms and has a brightness of 2000 lumens. Day and night modes adapt to ambient lighting and to size of the room.
₹1 lakh

SENNHEISER MOMENTUM
Noise cancelling headphones with integrated smart remote for selecting music titles, taking calls and activating voice control.
₹24,990

BOSE SOUNDDOCK PORTABLE
This uses patented waveguide speaker technology and powerful neodymium speakers. It also has a rechargeable lithium-ion battery and touch-sensitive volume control.
₹24,638

AT WORK

UDIT IS WEARING A SHIRT & SUIT BY CANALI; TIE & POCKETSQUARE BY TOM FORD; SWEATER BY ARMANI COLLEZIONI; WATCH BY ANTONIO BERNINI.

LENOVO IDEAPAD YOGA 13
The world's first multimode ultrabook with multi-touch screen can fold back 360 degrees and gives you flexibility.
₹78,790

OSIM UVENUS AIR PURIFIER
Multi-action Tru-air purification process. It has three scientifically researched mood lighting programmes: Relax, Balance and Energise. Pre-recorded mood music tunes are fed in for relaxation.
₹35,000 to ₹37,000

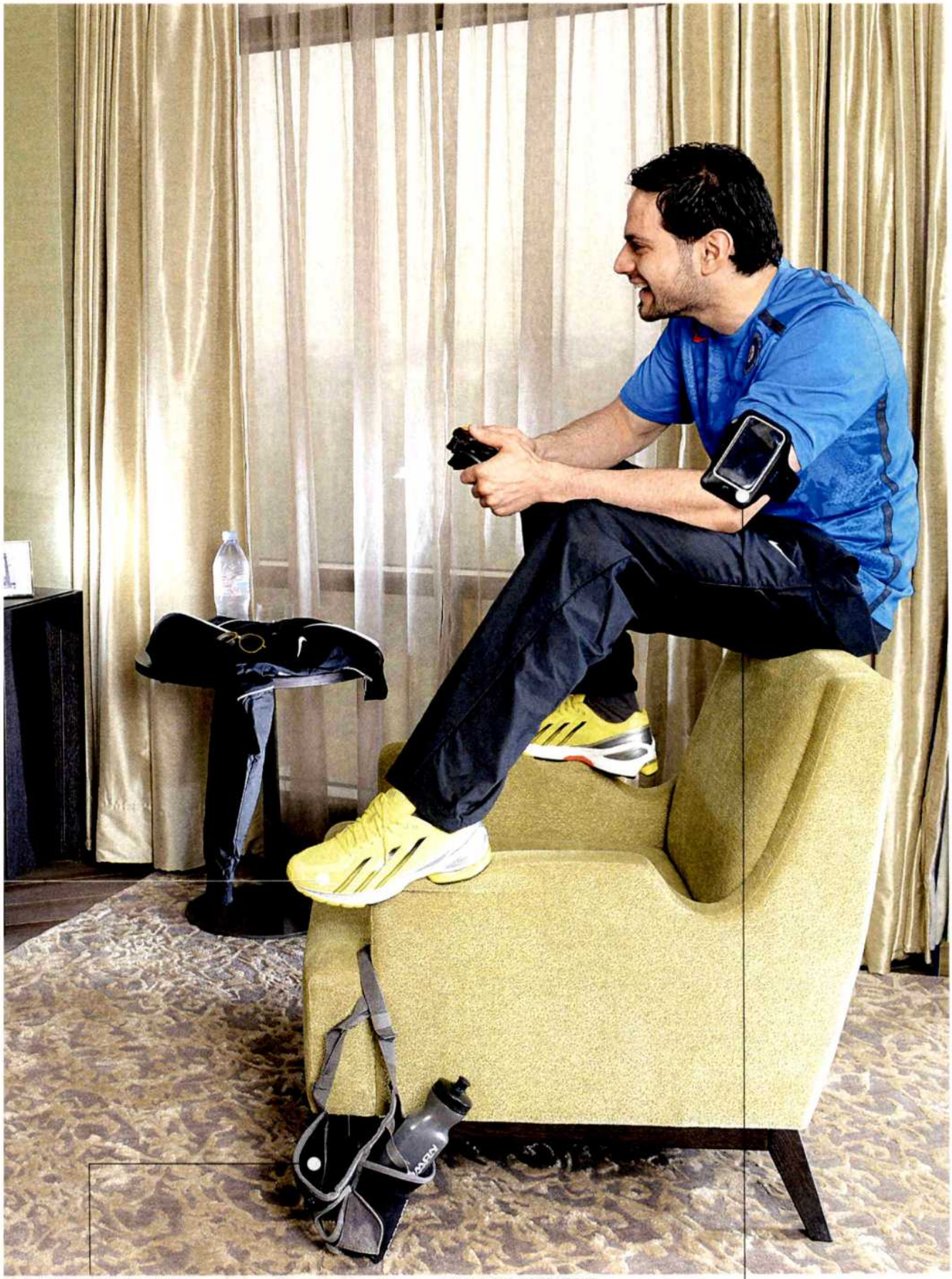
PLANTRONICS CALISTO 825
A 2.4-inch call management interface that helps sync PC with mobile. Wireband audio also supports noise cancelling and is a big boon.
₹40,190

UDIT IS WEARING A NIKE HYPERVENT LEGEND SS T-SHIRT & A NIKE JERSEY-LINED TWO-PIECE WARM-UP

AT PLAY

XBOX 360 4GB WITH KINECT
With a kinect sensor for full-body game control, and built-in wi-fi antennae, Xbox live subscription and an Xbox 360 wireless controller, this one will keep you moving and fit.
₹26,990

ADIZERO F50 RUNNER 3
This shoe has an ultra-lightplatform and upper mesh for comfort. The Formotion mid-foot unit and Adiprene forefoot add balance and protection
₹8,999



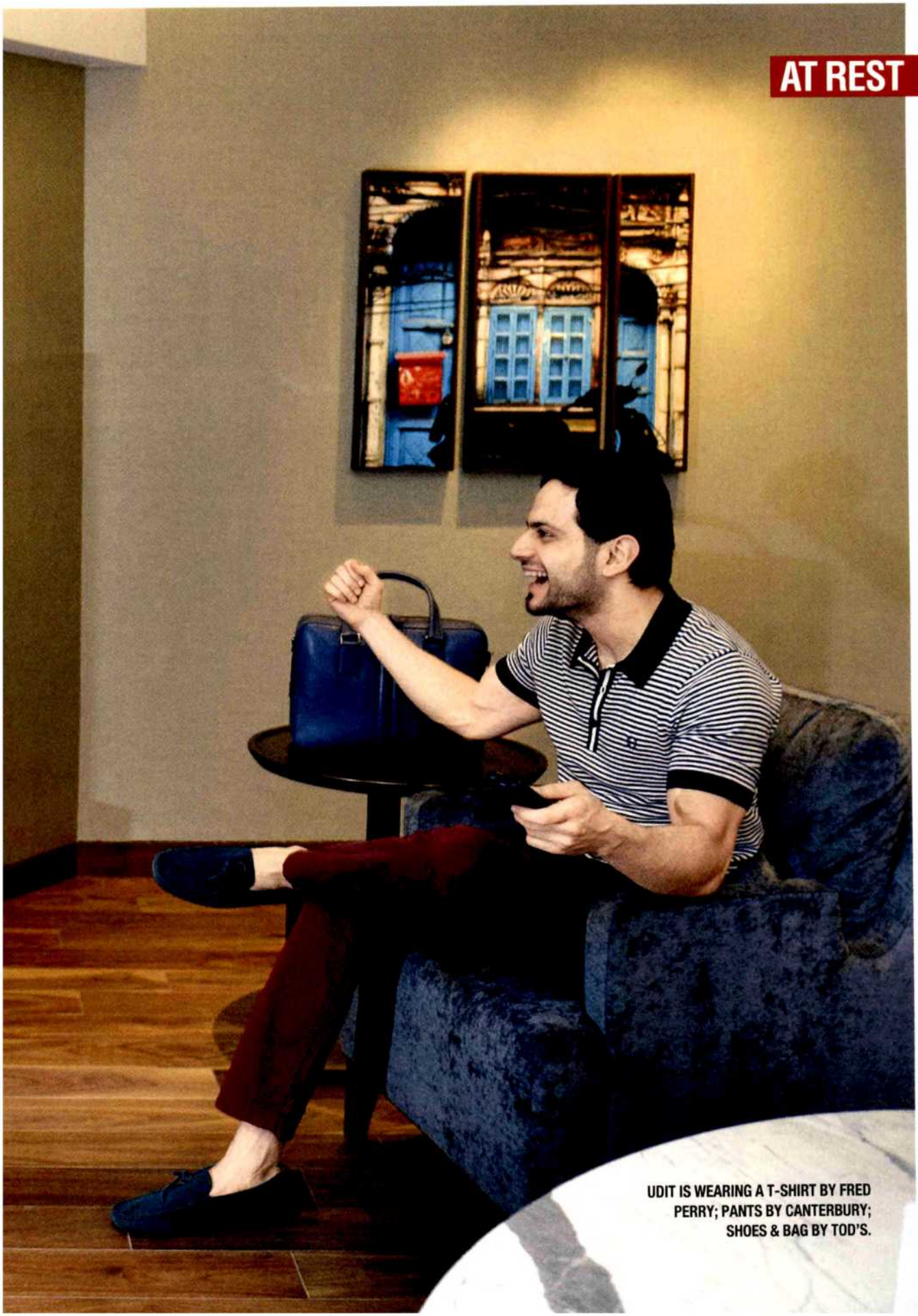
SALOMON HYDRO 45 BELT BAG
This 600-ml bottle comes with a mesh and 4D bottle holder, a zip-up pocket for your keys, and adjustable belt to keep you hydrated mid-workout.
₹2,500

BELKIN DUAL-FIT ARMBAND
With a velcro closure and stretchable neoprene material, this band is lightweight and sweat resistant. It is also resistant to light rain, and can be hand-washed. A reflective strip adds safety on your runs.
₹1,599

BELKIN WIRELESS ADAPTER
This screencast AV 4, wireless HDMI AV-TO-HDTV adapter connects up to 4 AV devices.
₹18,999

PANASONIC XH 175 HOME THEATRE SYSTEM
With a dynamic bass sound, a powerful bass-reflex subwoofer and a 20-cm big woofer, this home theatre system rules. Standard HDMI output ensures high quality pictures, while selectable speaker layout and an audio return channel help fine tune the sound.
₹19,990

SAMSUNG LED TV
Put your feet up at the end of the day and watch your favoutire show on a slim LED Series 8. With a wide colour enhancer and a Dolby Digital Plus / Dolby Pulse, you can be assured of perfect sound and picture quality.
₹3,89,000



UDIT IS WEARING A T-SHIRT BY FRED PERRY; PANTS BY CANTERBURY; SHOES & BAG BY TOD'S.

HEALTH SNIPPETS

TIRED? YOUR BODY MAY HURT MORE

A University of Iowa study has found a link between chronic pain, testosterone levels and fatigue. Scientists studying mice found that a protein that's linked to muscle pain works in conjunction with testosterone to protect against fatigue. The team compared muscle fatigue in male and female mice with and without the ASIC3 protein. Male mice with the protein were less fatigued by tasks assigned than female mice. However, male mice without the protein showed similar fatigue levels to female mice. Scientists believe the differentiator is higher testosterone levels in the first set of male mice. The breakthrough could help treat a range of fatigue and pain conditions.

Storm In A Teacup

Green tea has several undoubted health benefits but a debate has risen around claims that it can aid weight loss.

You've probably seen the ads while surfing through late-night TV. They start off with photos of ordinary folks (read: actors) that have quite clearly been stretched sideways to add "inches" to the model's abdomen. A voice-over tells you this was "Raj, 2 months ago. He was 130 kilos and had been deserted by his wife, fired by his company and abandoned by his dog. Then Raj discovered Magic Super Slim Green Tea and now he's super fit."

Cue, a new photo showing "Raj" in the same clothes as the earlier one, except the picture has been crunched back to its original width. It's not surprising that "Raj" is never seen on video, either before or after his tryst with the Magic Super Slim green tea. New dietary research helps us understand why.

Green tea does have a powerful antioxidant called EGCG. Those selling magic "herbal" teas claim it can greatly aid in reducing weight gain. Some even say it promotes 'fat-burning'. However, the amount of EGCG you'd find in a single cup of green tea won't make a dent on your waistline. A report published in the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews analysed 12 studies that lasted 90 days or more. It found that regular drinkers of green tea noticed no meaningful weightloss.

Even green tea extracts, which help concentrate the EGCG content into a single pill or teaspoon of powder, don't really help your cause.

Scientists studied a group of 30 relatively-healthy men who were put on similar diets. One group of men was given green tea extracts twice daily. Another was given a placebo while a third was given a placebo for six days and real extract on day seven. However, after testing, the researchers found that consuming green tea extracts did not improve fat burning in large quantities.

So does that mean green tea is useless? No. Green tea does have anti-oxidant chemicals that are known to slow down the physiological effects of ageing. What's more, a hot cup of green tea after meals will leave you feeling much better, particularly if you've eaten rich foods. So by all means continue drinking green tea. However, if you're looking to lose weight, start a diet and exercise plan.

Apps

THE E-WORKOUT PARTNER

Fitness Buddy by Azumio could easily be the cheapest, most effective alternative to that expensive personal fitness trainer you were thinking about. The app features 1,700 unique exercises, links to more than 1,000 high-definition demonstration videos and comprehensive workouts for all sorts of home equipment including barbells, dumbbells, kettlebells, resistance bands and medicine balls. What's more, it comes pre-loaded with more than 75 full workout routines to keep your regimen from getting too repetitive. If that's not enough, for you, you can even customise your own workout to focus on specific muscle groups or to work with specific kinds of equipment that are available to you. What's more, the app also helps you track the changes your body is going through as you progress. Simply input your weight and muscle measurements and it will spit out a comprehensive understanding of how your body has transformed through following your routines. The kicker, you get all this capability in one app for just ₹55. Fitness Buddy is available for Android and iTunes.

PRESSURE ON THE BRAIN

A bowl of cereals is a great start to any day. The key is to avoid the kinds that are high on sugar. Here is a list of healthy cereals and serving suggestions.

Oats cooked in milk, they're quick and easy to make. Serve with honey or a low-calorie sweetener and a shake of cinnamon powder. Alternatively, try savoury oats by cooking in water and adding salt and masalas for flavour.

Muesli Undoubtedly one of the healthiest cereals, it consists of rolled oats, corn flakes, wheat and fruits and nuts. While traditionally mixed with orange juice, it is now preferred with milk, coffee and yogurt.

Shredded wheat If you want an alternative to corn flakes, try this. It has 60% more calories, but contains no cholesterol, sugar or sodium. It's also got more fibre, protein and whole grains.

Cereals

Work

The Least Healthy Jobs

Everyone has to sacrifice something to earn a living. But is a great salary worth sacrificing your number one asset—your health? It's time to weigh your options more carefully.

Lawyers Long hours, high pressure and high stakes mean you're at greater risk of depression, high blood pressure and heart disease. Watch your diet and try meditation to keep calm.

Corporate Executives As you climb the ladder, you typically face higher rates of back problems from awkward postures as well as heart disease and stress. Try ergonomic chairs and and once again, watch that diet.

Service staff Hotel or retail employees endure long hours standing as well as angry customers. Back and leg problems are common as is higher stress. Allow for periodic breaks as well as an employees-only destressing zone.

BADEN-BADEN

'IT'S SO NICE, THEY NAMED IT TWICE'

In the midst of the formidable Black Forest in Swabia, lies the elegant spa town Baden-Baden. The destination warrants a worthy stopover on your next business trip to Germany.

A view of one of the pools from the magnificient dome of Roman-Irish Friedrichsbad

One can just about picture Caracalla—the wiry-haired, big-boned, Roman emperor—soaking naked in a large pool at the Friedrichsbad bathhouse in Baden-Baden, when he suddenly makes a thundering declaration that the town was *the* definitive wellness destination of his time. Word spread and from then on, royalty and members of aristocracy from as far away as Russia came to these areas and made them their own. The Romans saw the mineral springs for what they were: therapeutic. All across Europe, Roman baths lie scattered, reminescent of the good life and need for indulgence.

The German word 'bad' (pronounced 'baad') translates to 'take-a-bath'. The Rhine Valley in Germany is dotted with town names suffixed with the term. These denote the presence of a historic bathhouse. Baden-Baden is chief among them.

The curative hot springs here are rich in sodium chloride, sulphates, bicarbonates, hydrogen sulphide and radon—minerals that are said to cure a number of musculoskeletal conditions including rheumatoid arthritis.

But modern-day Baden-Baden isn't just a sanatorium for the Romans and royal. Instead, it is an elegant retreat for a discerning group that spends its winter months in Monte Carlo or Saint Tropez and heads to this temperate spa town when it gets warmer. With the town's posh amenities like an airport and an Edwardian racecourse, it is also fast becoming a weekend getaway for corporates travelling on work to the region. These

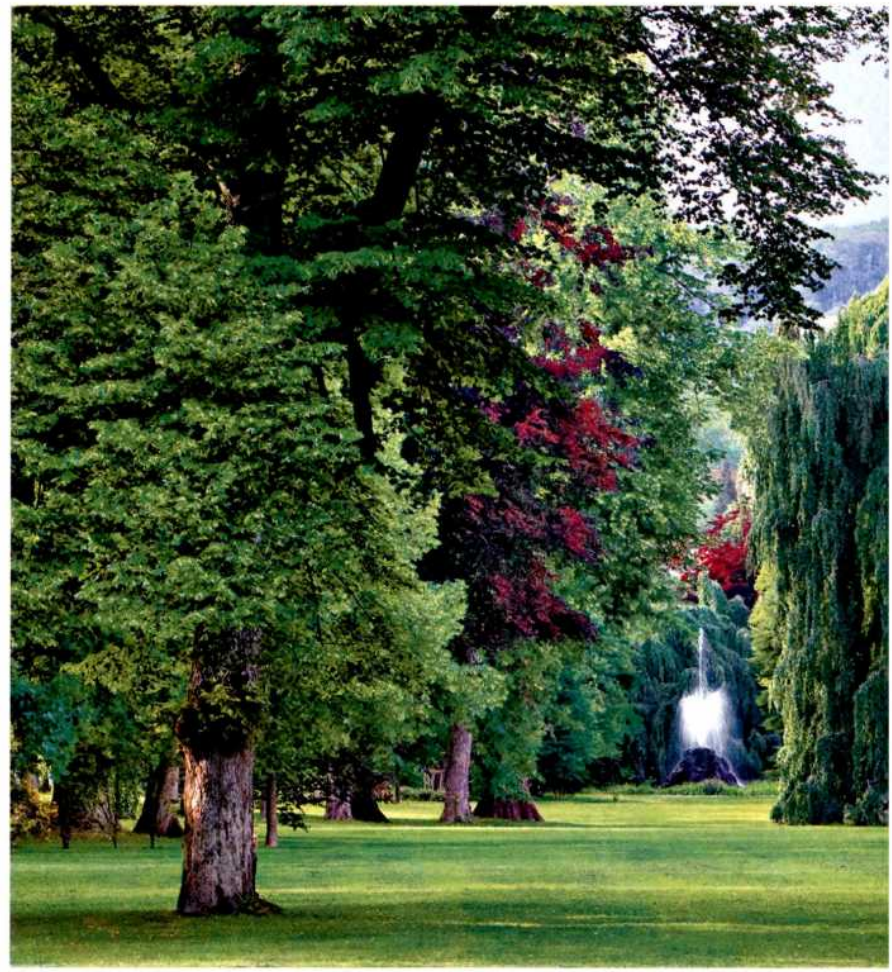
lovers of decadence soak in the waters here, gamble at the ritzy casino, stroll in the immaculate parks, and waltz at the nightly balls. Of course, it helps that the town is just an hour's drive on the satin-smooth autobahn from the French border. It makes for a worthy stopover if you are headed to Frankfurt from Stuttgart.

"Baden-Baden has more millionaires than any other German town," gushes Beate Ando from the town's tourism office. She leads a guided tour through the *belle époque* townscape in the morning—pointing out the historic buildings and museums, dropping in a quick joke on the stream-like "mighty" River Oos that flows sinuously through the town. The centre is grounded by the charming Lichtentaler Allee park, bedecked with splendid trees and wealthy dwellings. There's also the Kurhaus, or community centre, with Europe's second-largest opera house and a casino that's steeped in neoclassical grandeur. There's also a cable car ride to Mount Merkur that overlooks the Black Forest.

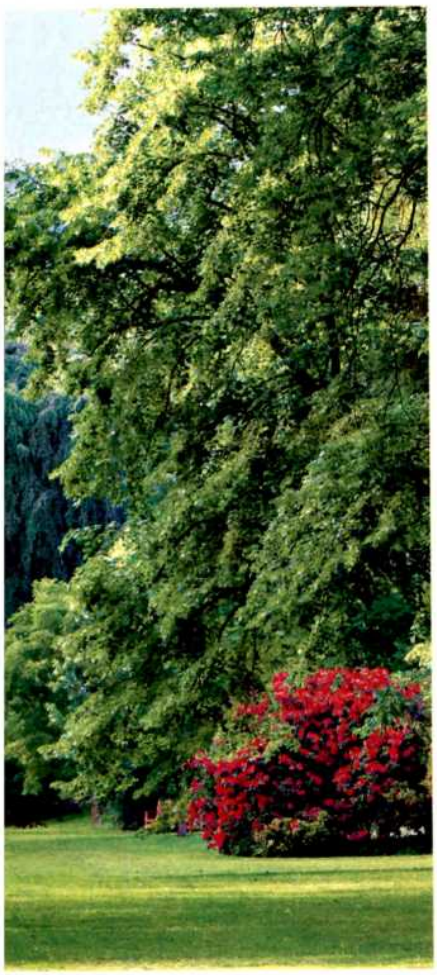
THE FREIKORPERKULTUR MOVEMENT THAT BROKE OUT IN THE LAST CENTURY MADE NUDITY WIDELY ACCEPTABLE IN PUBLIC AREAS IN GERMANY

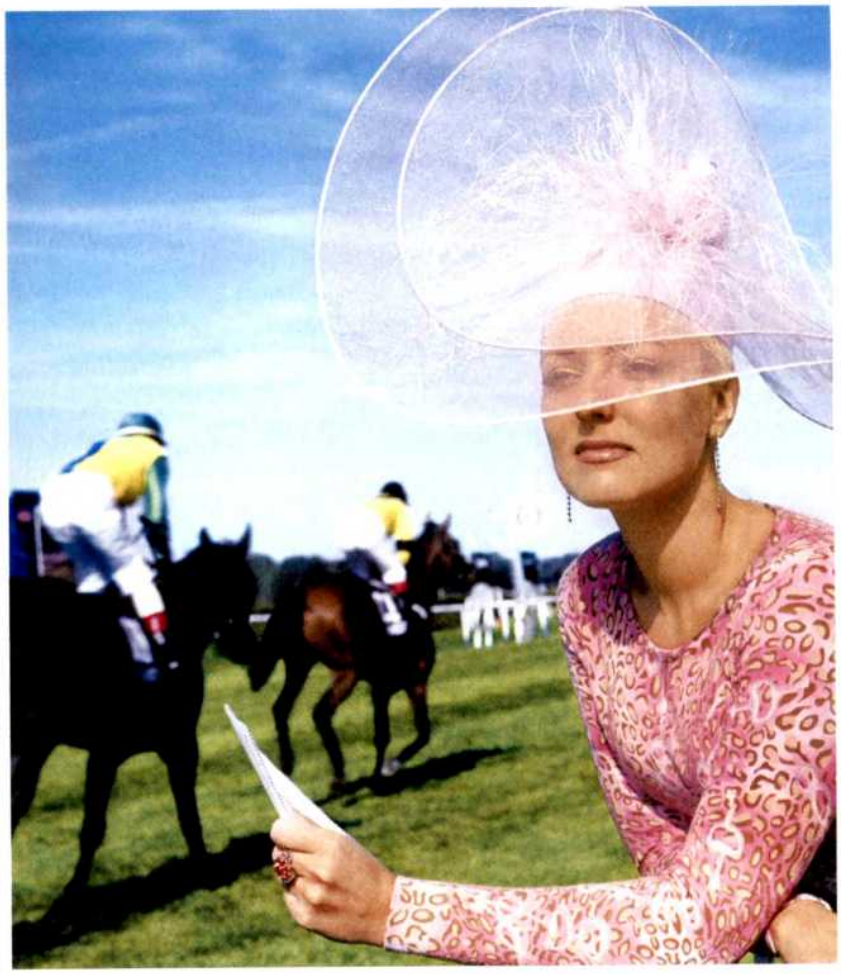
During the tour I asked Beate informs that the town is most famous for its two bathhouses: Roman-Irish Friedrichsbad and Caracalla Therme. The latter is a modern building with large indoor and outdoor swimming pools, grottoes and saunas. For those who don't quite fancy the idea of going *au naturel*, as in the Friedrichsbad, Caracalla Therme is a relief as bathing suits are allowed.

"Which one would you pick?" I ask Beate, barely concealing my confusion, to which she replied, "I prefer Caracalla-Therme as I don't want to bump into my neighbours in the



(Clockwise from bottom left) **The neoclassical Kurhaus; Gradations of green grace the Lichtentaler Allee park; The racecourse lies on the outskirts of the town and draws glamourous crowds**





BADEN-BADEN RITUALS

- **How to Get there**
  Baden-Baden is close to the A5, the Frankfurt–Basel autobahn. The town also has its own airport—Karlsruhe-Baden-Baden airport (Baden Airpark; www.badenairpark.de).

- **Where to Stay**
  Dorint Maison Messmer is located in the heart of downtown Baden-Baden, and is literally a hop away from The Kurhaus and Casino. Rooms go upwards from $249 (₹13,921) per person per night. Tel: 07221 30120

- **Where to Dine**
  The family-run restaurant of Hotel & Gasthaus Traube Neuweier is located in the midst of rolling vineyards and has the Black Forest as a backdrop. Sample some delectable Swabian cuisine with local wine. Tel: 07223 9682-0

- **Spa Sojourns**
  Friedrichsbad bath entry fee: €21 (₹1,425) per person; Timings: 9am–10pm, last entry 8pm. The Caracalla Spa entry fee: €14 (₹951) per person for two hours. Timings: 9am-7pm.

Friedrichsbad."

Being naked in public is a sobering thought for anyone who is even mildly bashful. But the relaxed approach to the 125-year-old all-nude Roman-Irish bath is a clear indication of their nonchalant nudist culture.

The Freikorperkultur movement that broke out in the last century made nudity acceptable in public areas in Germany. Guidebooks warn prudes of the world about Germans sunbathing in the buff in public parks. It was fine if it was a matter of choice, but here, at the thermal bathhouse, nudity is mandatory.

The aesthetic distraction of Friedrichsbad with its Neo-Renaissance style cupolas, mosaics, and column-ringed pools of spring water help in calming frayed nerves. To quote Mark Twain, one of the many famous patrons of this bathhouse, 'After ten minutes I forget time; after 20 minutes, the world.'

There are 17 'wellbeing' stations in Friedrichsbad—from geothermal steam rooms to pools that are set at different temperatures. I spend the next two hours wallowing in pure aquatic bliss. While entering the bathhouse I had believed I wouldn't survive even half an hour but to my surprise, I linger.

Twain may have also famously said that "clothes maketh a man", but he too was smitten by the waters of Baden-Baden. More than a century later, the ritual he so enjoyed is still very much alive. ■

A recommended detour if you visit Frankfurt on business.

GOURMET CENTRAL

The Dirty Martini

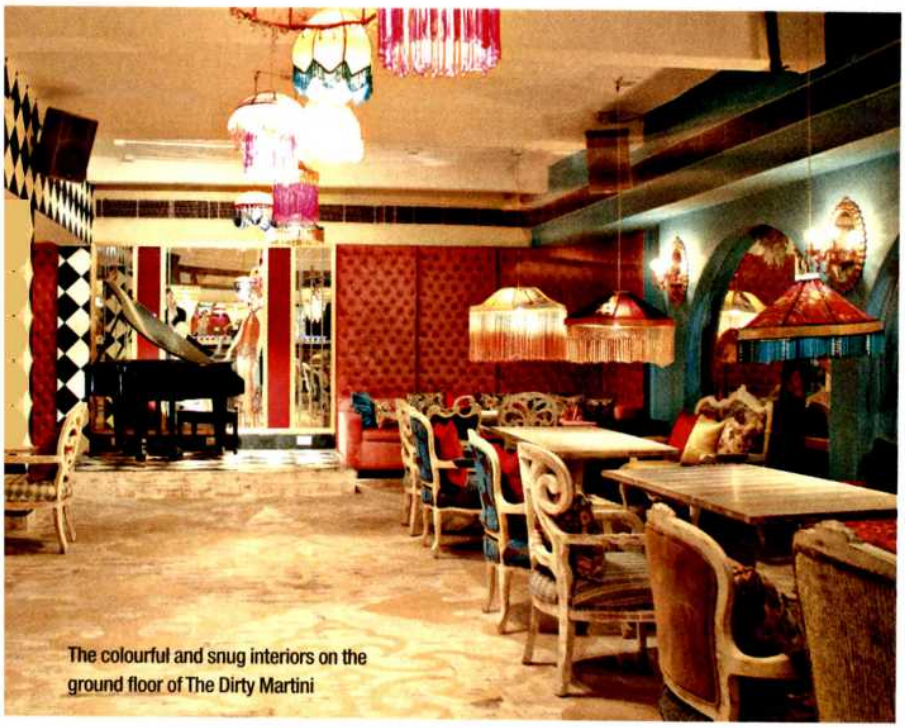
Another flamboyant new entrante on Delhi's nightlife circuit misses the mark, but hints at potential in the months to come. BY HITANI KAUR

Adding a splash of colour and theatrics to the all-white ensemble of Olive Garden Restaurant, The Dirty Martini stands out in juxtaposition, but falls short of the expectations elicited by its reputation.

Promoted as a speakeasy reminiscent of 1920s prohibition, The Dirty Martini fails to deliver in terms of atmosphere, approach or ambience. Unlike what you'd imagine of an illicit watering hole, nothing about the space spells discretion. The décor is a bafflement between Moroccon and gypsy themes, but is enchanting nonetheless, with crystal lampshades, generously scattered throw pillows, and a playful colour palette. Visitors have the option of sitting indoors on the ground floor or making their way up to the terrace above, where the vibe is more relaxed.

As far as the martinis go, they lacked any element of 'dirty', and were just passable. The espresso martini, however, deserves a thumbs-up; a delicious concoction of Kahlua, espresso and vermouth, it was an instant hit. Unfortunately the extremely slow service was a complete buzz-kill; not even a martini warrants 25 minutes of preparation. The same applies to the bar snacks, which came after an hour-long wait and no justification. From the little that we did end up sampling, the cigar-smoked salmon nachos (Havana Joe) were surprisingly good, although I found their presentation in oyster shells rather unnecessary given the contents of the snack. The vegetarians at the table ended up wasting their chevre patty with poached apricots, and the ratatouille crostini was just average.

The extremely delicious and very potent Espresso Martini



The colourful and snug interiors on the ground floor of The Dirty Martini

Apparently there's a story behind everything on the menu (Havana Joe, was a gangster who loved salmon and cigars, hence the dish paying tribute to the man), but that quirky element is lost on diners after a prolonged wait.

I'd recommend The Dirty Martini based purely on its location, playful setting and the hope that its service will improve. If you're expecting an elaborate theme complete with a hushed entrance, the illusion of illegal boozing or underground grunge; don't bother. Don't go expecting a speakeasy, and you won't be disappointed.

BT MORE RECOMMENDS

- Havana Joe
- Espresso Martini

Meal for two (with alcohol) ₹3,500
(+91) 8130394294

Laze in the Sun

The Sunday brunch at Az Bar by blueFROG, Delhi, is real value for money and a great way to bond with the family. BY PRACHI BHUCHAR

The family is desperate to monopolise you on a Sunday and what better way to spend the first half of the day with them than by going for a brunch? The Az Bar by blueFROG Sunday brunch comes to Delhi after a long wait and has a tough act to live up to, given the fact that the Mumbai brunch is so sought after and well established. Located in a courtyard with a fine terrace and indoor seating as well, the mood is relaxed and non-uppity and perfect for unwinding after a hectic week at work.

The brunch with alcohol includes a couple of fun cocktails and a selection of wines, beers and other spirits. Not a very large list but sufficient to see you through the afternoon. Begin with the tapas which are laid out buffet-style indoors. There are a variety of salads that are exceptional. The corn and water chestnut salad was a cracker as was the sweet pork and pineapple salad. You also have the staples like a tomato-mozzarella, a couscous salad and an interesting rocket and orange combine that hit the spot. The best thing about the buffet menu is the variety of pork and beef tapas. In a city where hardly anyone serves beef, this is a welcome change. Give the mushroom pate a go as well; it has that delicious creaminess associated with foie gras and is absolutely addictive.

If you arrive for the brunch closer to breakfast, opt for the eggs Benedict which is a classic; the chef does quite a good rendition of this. Interestingly of the four mains, three are vegetarian options of which the mushroom risotto is a good bet. The grills though were a disappointment. The dishes lacked colour, flavour and looked terribly uninspiring. The prawns were chewy but the pork, doused generously with bbq sauce was decent. End the meal at the dessert buffet. Like most dessert buffets, this one too had a 'mass produced' feel and most of the dishes bordered on average. The chocolate pudding is the only one really worth mentioning

The buffet is laid out indoors and you can also order specials with your steward. Play a round of Taboo as you wait for your drinks.

Having said that, the live music, fantastic location and reasonably priced brunch make it a real steal. Though the mains need sprucing, I would recommend tucking into the tapas with gusto. For those who like a few drinks in the sun, non-fussy food and laidback atmosphere, this is just the place.

BT MORE RECOMMENDS

- miniFROG pizza
- Mushroom Risotto

Meal for two (with alcohol) ₹3,600
(+91) 11 30800300.

TRACK & WIELD

SWEET NOTHINGS

This Paul Smith key ring with an engraved logo, iconic vintage multi-stripe and men's dress shoes makes an apt gift for a sartorialist.
Price on request.

LAUNCH PAD

The Strut Launchport iPad recharging system comprises a charging pedestal crafted from jewellery-grade stainless steel and comes with an array of magnets that holds the iPad in place. The rotating spherical pedestal means you can work as the device charges.
Price: ₹68,150

NAUTICAL SPIRIT

Prada's newest masculine fragrance is named after the sailboat and the sailing team *Luna Rossa*. The top notes of this fragrance are bitter orange and lavender. Awash with a sporting spirit, it captures the thrill of the high seas.
Price: ₹3,961 for 50ml

THINGS THAT CLICK

The German camera company, Leica, has carved a niche on the black-and-white photography front with its luxury line of colourless shooters. Its latest M model features the company's first 24MP image sensor, rangefinders offer a live view and it captures light sensitivity between ISO 200 to 6,400. It's the most advanced camera in the monochrome photography genre.
Price:₹3,78,914

CLASSIC STYLE

Stay well-accessorised whatever the occasion with Dunhill's clever reversible leather belt. Choose from a classic brown or textured navy finish to complement all your casual and formal looks with aplomb. Price: ₹25,616

SHADEY BUSINESS

Immaculately crafted from a fine metal and acetate frame, Tom Ford's luxurious sunglasses encapsulate the label's sophisticated approach. Team them with a suede jacket to exude that British suave on city breaks. Price on request

UPGRADE

PASHAS OF PUFF

Hublot the Swiss watchmaker par excellence joins forces with the renowned cigar company Arturo Fuente, which is famous for its hand-rolled cigars and produce over 30 million per year, to create The King Power Arturo Fuente timepiece. The watch commemorates the centenary of the Arturo Fuente brand and pays tribute to the Opus X, one of the rarest cigars in the world. The 48 mm automatic chronograph comes with a matte brown dial with gold-plated indices and black and red accents that features the Opus X logo at 6 o'clock. A hornback crocodile strap with white stitching completes the design. The caseback features an illustration of Fuente patriarch Carlos Fuente Sr. and his son Carlos Fuente Jr. Price on request

BT More

MY STUFF

RAJAT JAIN

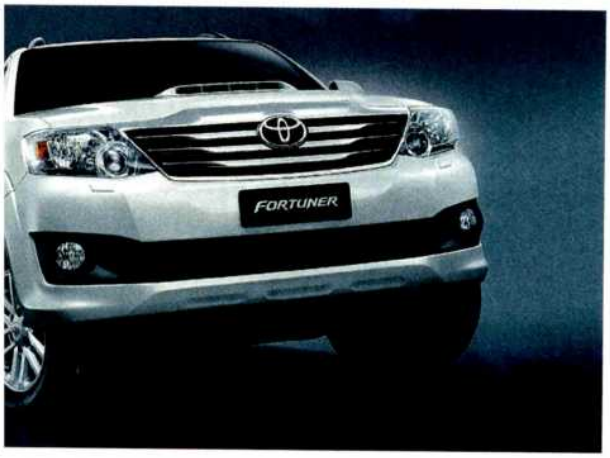
MD, Xerox India

MY FAVOURITE THINGS

Camera Nikon SLR **Timepiece** Omega
Work Station Must Haves iPad, Dell laptop and Blackberry Bold 5
Pens Cross and Montblanc

MIND SPACE

Books Fiction by Ludlum **Magazines** India Today and Time
Movies Retro Bollywood **Websites** moneycontrol.com



HOME IMPROVEMENT

Drives Toyota Fortuner **Entertainment System** I enjoy The Beatles on my Bang and Olufsen set **Bedside** Good to Great by Jim Collins and Habit of Winning by Prakash Iyer

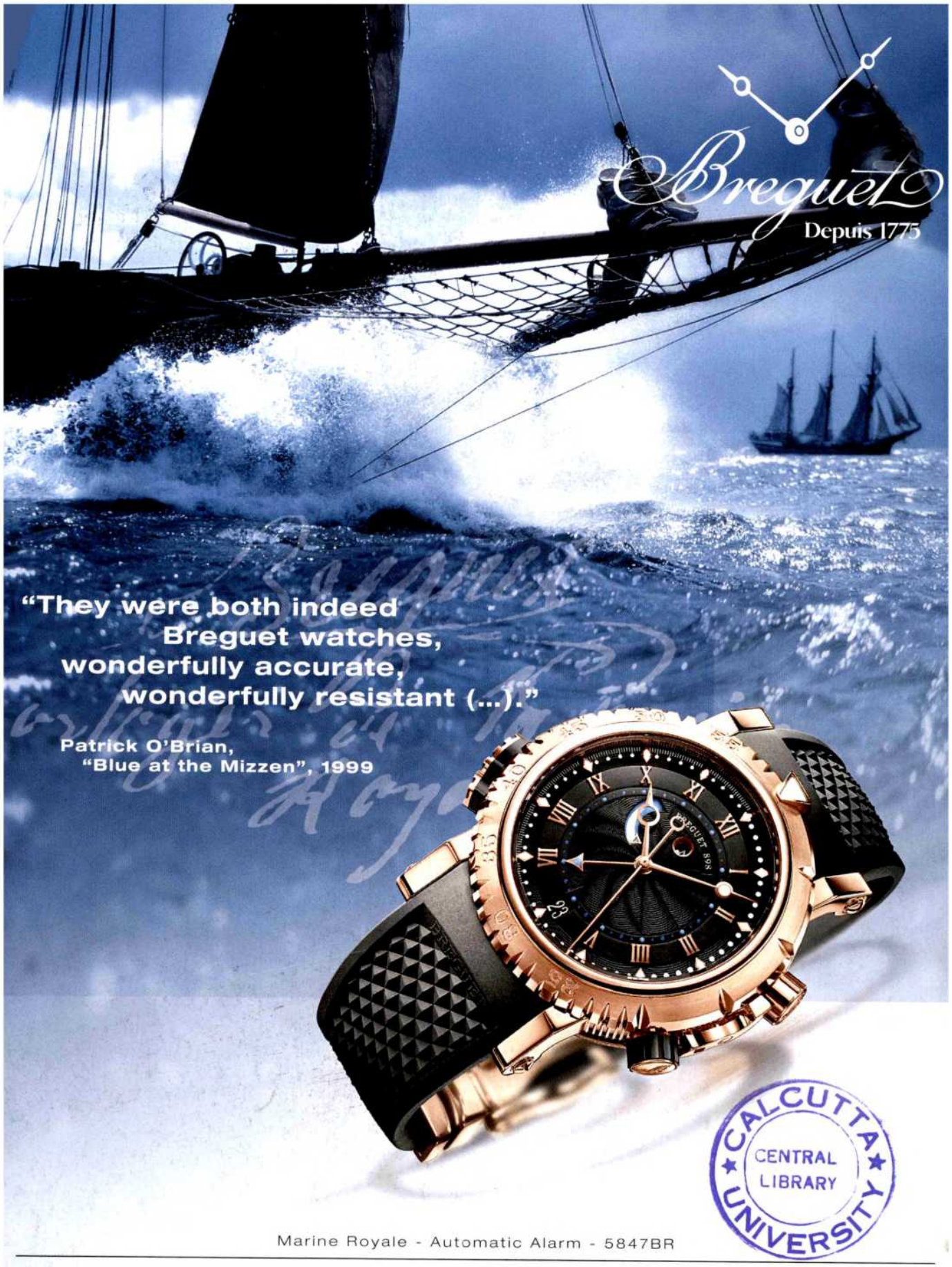
VANITY FAIR

After-shave Hugo Boss and Ralph Lauren Polo **Shoes** Pavers Comfort
T-Shirts Abercrombie and Fitch
Shower Gel Chanel Men

ABSOLUT SETH.

The character embraces what is his.
The character embraces what it is.

ABSOLUT, one of the world's most iconic brands, has always been known for its collaborations with creative minds. Writer Vikram Seth distils his inspiration both in poetry and on canvas, creating an experience that is truly ABSOLUT.



Marine Royale - Automatic Alarm - 5847BR

Bangalore: Ethos Summit, tel: 080 41130611/12 **Chennai:** The Helvetica, tel: 044 28464096/97
Kolkata: Exclusive Lines, tel: 033 22820626 **Mumbai:** Ethos Summit, tel: 022 26120521
New Delhi: Johnson Watch Co, Connaught Place, tel: 011 41513110/41513121 – Johnson Watch Co, South Extn, tel: 011 24642299/41646766

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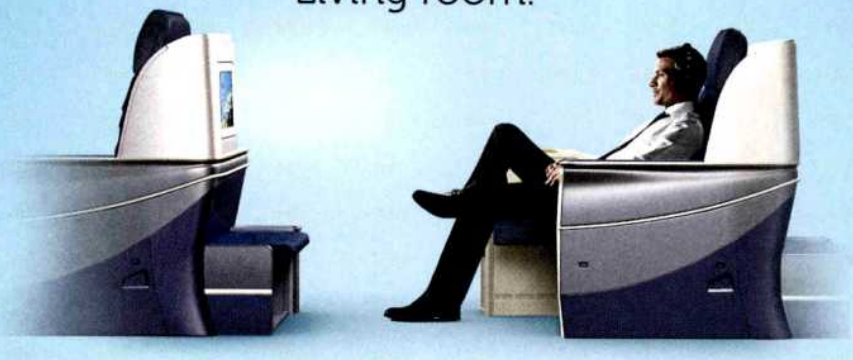
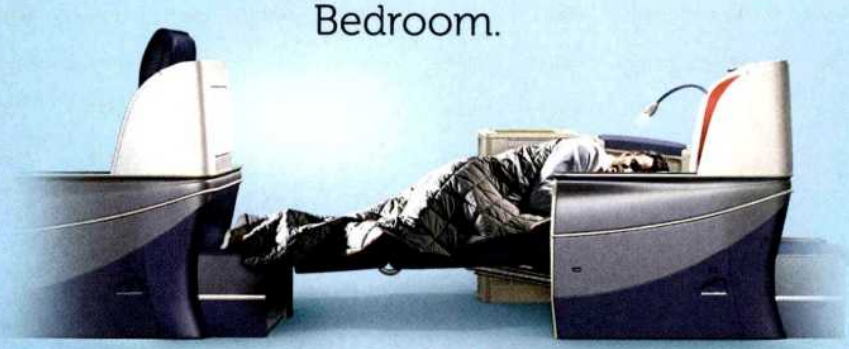


Bedroom.



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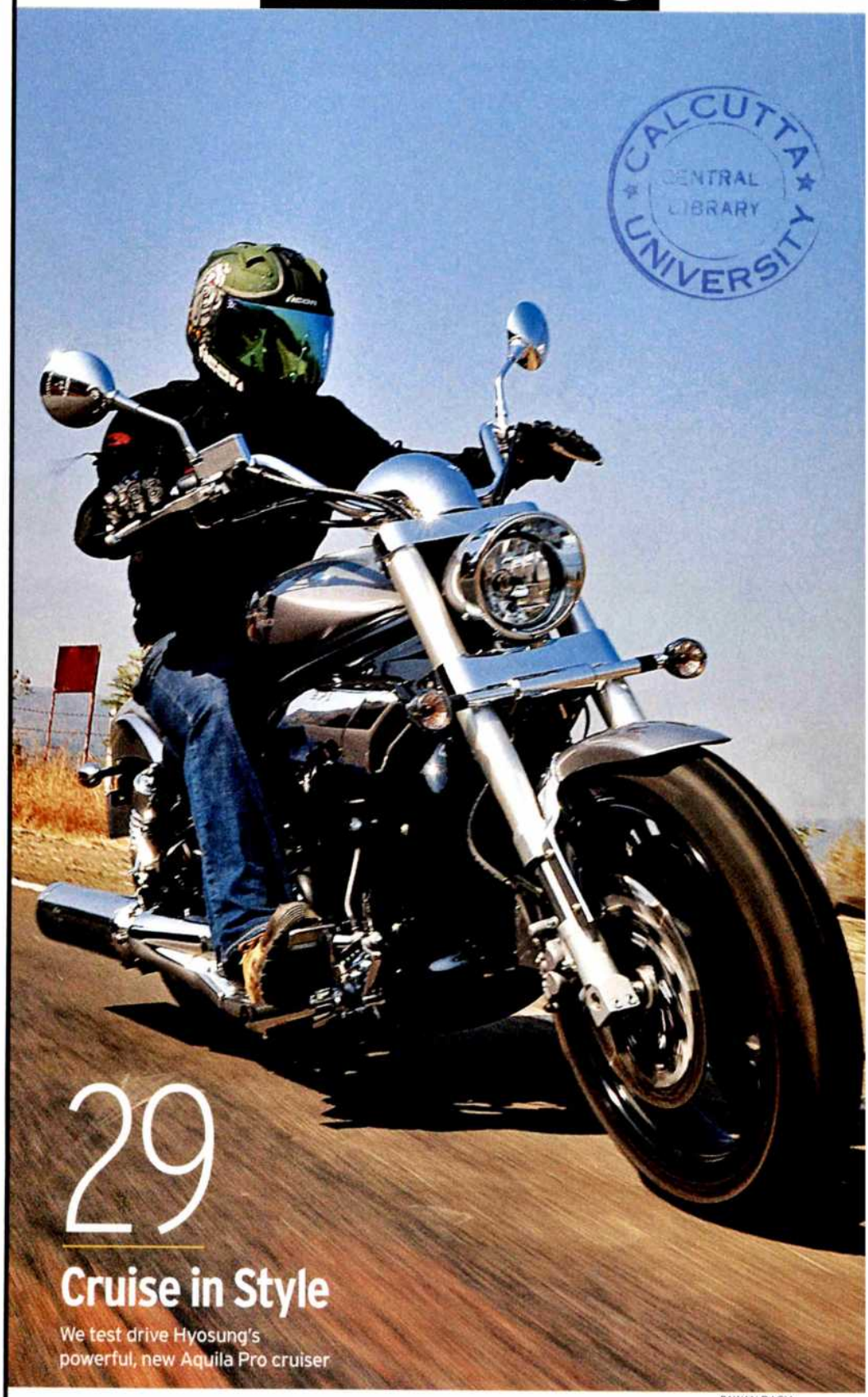

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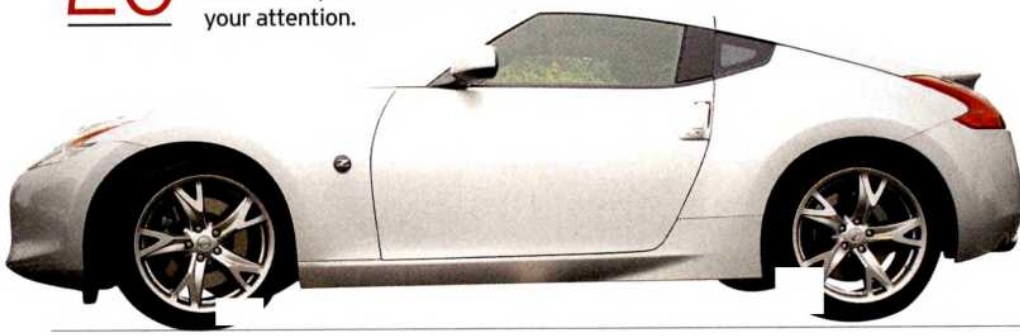

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CORRIGENDUM

In 'Tech & You' (Page 22) of BT More's February 2013 issue, we incorrectly labeled a speaker as the 'Bose Soundlink Bluetooth'. Its correct name is 'Bose Soundlink Air'. We regret the error.

Cover Image: CORBIS

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Sun Power Your Home

Here's a list of home improvement projects that will let you make the most of this season in the sun.

WATER PURIFIER

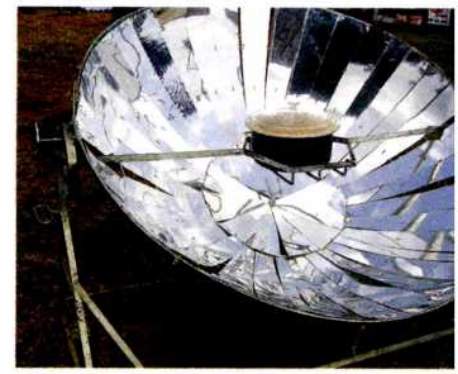
Take a wooden enclosure and paint its exterior using black paint, the one that's used in barbecue pits. This promotes absorption. Now, install a reflective surface using aluminum foil at the back and side walls of the enclosure and glue some white foam insulation at the bottom. Put a tray of untreated water inside the enclosure and place a sheet of glass on top. Fit a catch trough at the bottom of the glass, tapering downward into the container, such that it collects the purified water. The mouth of the contraption needs to face the sun.

SOLAR SHOWER

Take an insulated camping shower bag; fill it about three quarters leaving the top clear. Suspend it from a fibre rod and leave it under direct sunlight for around an hour. Attach a thermometre to the bag and drag it indoors whenever it touches your desirable degree. It's also a great pool side bath idea that rations water and electricity intake.

OVEN AND GRILL

Open a big black umbrella with 16 ribs of 1.2cm each and glue reflective aluminum onto its inner side. Cut off the shaft and using tension chords, fit a small camera tripod in the centre. On this you could either glue a small barbecue grill or place a cooking pot. While the grill needs to be high-temperature resistant silicon, the por should be low, black in colour and ap-



proximately 20cm in diametre. Most lids available are glass, so it's advisable to use matte resistant spray paint and turn them black. Stand behind the cooker because this avoids making shadows on the reflector and turn the cooker at least twice an hour.

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WORK FROM HOME IDEAS

Taking a few months off between a job change? Here's how you can sit back and use the internet to keep the moolaah flowing in.

The Linguist
Register as a teacher on an online language learning platform to take language lessons over video chat with students globally.

The Artist
Photographers and illustrators can sell their work to the stock websites which earn you a royalty and credit whenever images are used.

The Mentalist
Use social networking websites to promote products and earn commission every time a page creates a sale or earns a good number of clicks.

The Writer
From reviewing a gadget or describing products for e-commerce sites, writing contents for websites is the most conventional work from home idea. If you have the expertise, and skill, start a consumer blog that attracts clicks and consequently advertisers.

Just Google it, Correctly!

Some things in life remain a mystery. For everything else there's Google. A smarter way to browse on this search engine can save you a lot of time and effort. Here's how you can channelise those searches and get more than what you're looking for.

WEBSITE DETAILS

The Faviconize google tab adds small icons next to each result, so you can see what website it's from. You can scan the website details before getting in. This helps you avoid mediocre ones and guides you to the most frequented, useful, or popular ones.

ON THE SAME PAGE

The Autopagerize user script allows you to keep scrolling without having to hit the next button and straddle between many pages.

SPAM ALERT

There's a block link that shows up under the google result. So, if you happen to enter a site that's not worth your while, enter the link and keep yourself from wasting any more time on it. This saves much time and effort.

NOT EVERY TIME

If you're looking for something very specific, try a lesser known search engine that suits your requirements better. There's a cruft-free Blekko or a data driven Wolfram Alpha.

CATCH THE KEYWORD

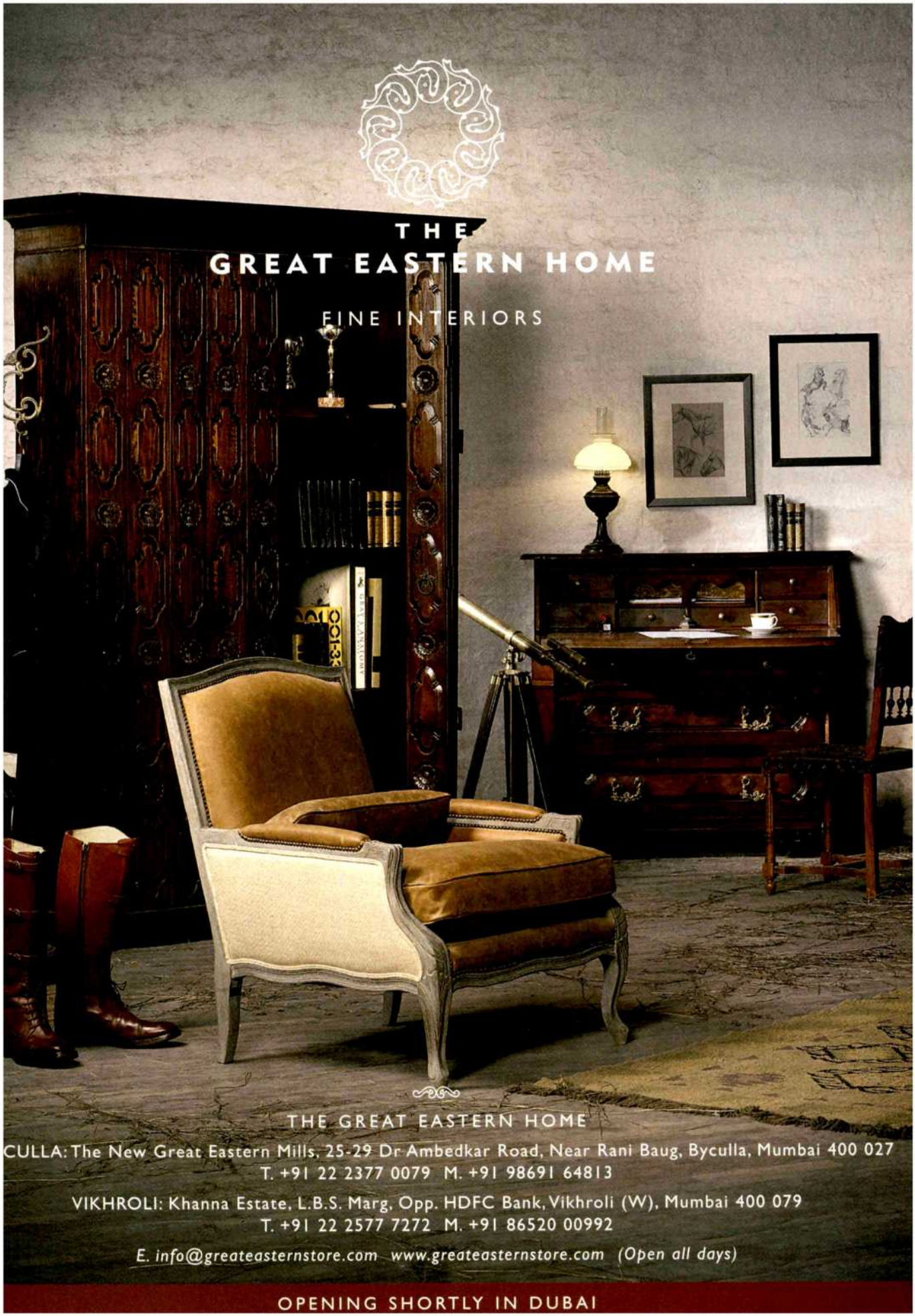
Install Google Quick Scroll. This highlights your search keywords on all the resulting pages, and helps in streamlining your search.

NO FRILLS

Google isn't case sensitive so don't bother capitalising. Also, save yourself the trouble of inserting punctuations everywhere because this too doesn't affect your search results in any way. Also, if 'the' and '&' isn't essential to your query, avoid using them.

DESCRIPTIVE DEAL

You get relevant results only from unique word queries. For instance, 'Pink Floyd ringtones' will give you better results than 'pink floyd songs, or Pink Floyd sounds'. If your first search page doesn't show what you're looking for, then you're missing the unique word.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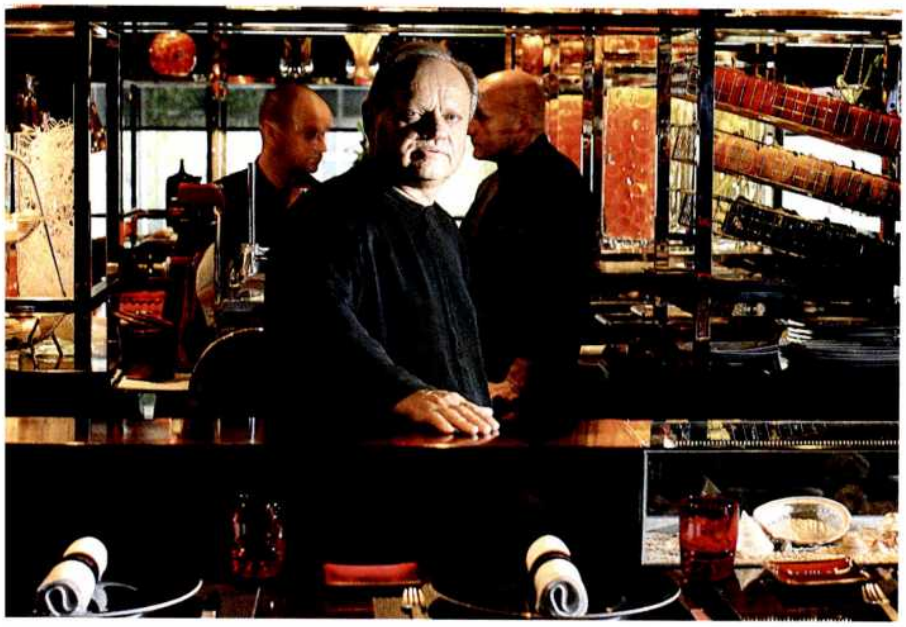


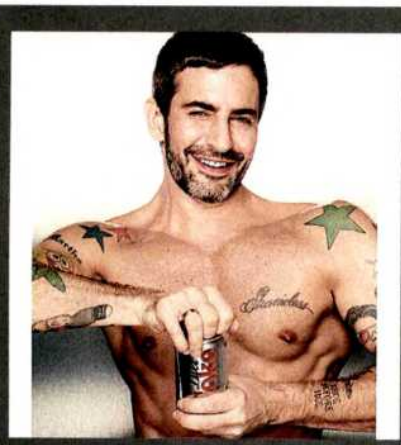
Eat Out In Asia

The Miele Guide 2013 enlists Asia's Top 20 restaurants and also unveils an additional 500 places to eat at

With Asia looking more and more attractive for business, the region has seen a growth in business travellers. Keeping this in mind, the Miele Guide, which takes on the annual task of listing the Top 20 restaurants that rule the culinary roost, has listed Asia's Top 20 for 2013. The elimination and selection process is extensive, and is subject to the opinion of both critics and the public. Voters get to cast their ballot by choosing from among a shortlist of restaurants selected by a panel of 73 of the world's most respected restaurant critics and food writers. After four rigorous rounds of voting, this year highlighted 17 countries and a grand total of 500 restaurants (exceeding last years entrants by 50) that made the final cut. This years crowned winner is Robuchon au Dôme in Macau, which received an extensive facelift and name change last year, and has replaced Singapore's much-loved Iggy's which has moved down to fourth place. Previously called Robuchon a Galera and described as 'old and anachronous,' the restaurant has transformed into a casual albeit chic contemporary space run by French celebrity chef Joel Robuchon.

Chef Tetsuya Wakuda's Waku Ghin in Singapore is in second place and is undeniably the place to go for some of the most delectable cuts of meat. While Hong Kong and Singapore lead the listings with five restaurants each in the Top 20 rankings, Shanghai, Bali, Seoul, Tokyo and both New Delhi and Chennai also get much-deserved space. With Dakshin in Chennai taking the 16th slot for its delicious southern cuisine, Bukhara in New Delhi just about slips in at number 20.

In addition to Asia's Top 20 for 2013, the Miele Guide also enlists the top five restaurants in each of the countries featured in the guide (with the exception of those with very few restaurants listed) and further gives the scoop on 480 restaurants that are Asian favourites. Start eating and make your way through the extensive menus.



Marc Jacobs Dresses Up Diet Coke

Having stocked wardrobes around the globe with his stylistic designs, designer Marc Jacobs is exploring other media and extending his style repertoire. Taking over from Jean Paul Gaultier as the creative director of Diet Coke for the year 2013, the man is all set to give the Coke can and aluminum bottles a makeover and imprint them with his signature style. As Diet Coke celebrates 30 years of European sales, the new designs by Jacobs will capture the rise of female empowerment over the last three decades and integrate this with his favourite symbols and trademark motifs. As a prequal to what is yet to come, the designer has shot an advertisement which exposes his chiseled body in a style that reiterates the spirit of the campaign. Get ready for a lot more fizz and sizzle.

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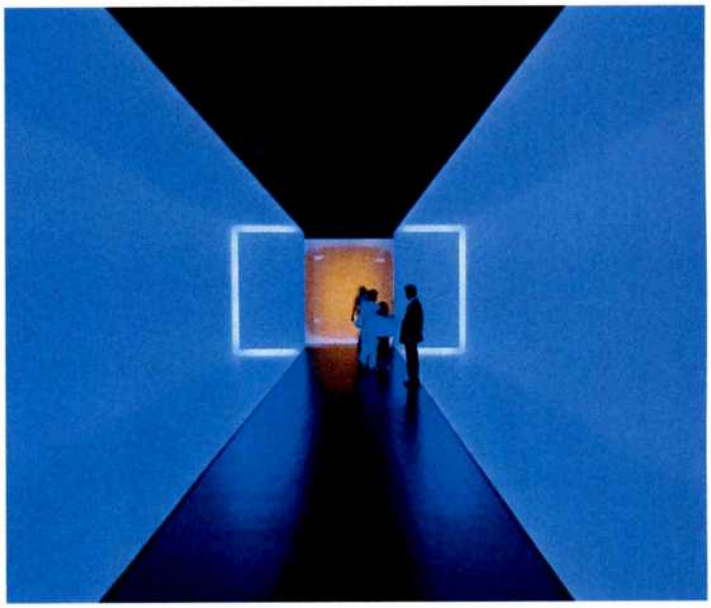
SWAN SONG TO SWAN LAKE

The film *Black Swan* was a real clincher for director Darren Aronofsky's career, but it also did a lot for its cast and crew. Choreographer Benjamin Millepied, who helped transform lead actress Natalie Portman into an obsessed, paranoid ballerina later went on to become her better half. But more importantly, his work helped him land one of the most coveted and respected jobs in the world of dance. He has been named director of one of the world's most revered ballet companies, the Paris Opera Ballet. The Frenchman who is just 35, is a former principal dancer with the New York City Ballet, but has no previous ties to the company, and is known mostly for his innovative work outside of classical ballet. Replacing Brigitte Lefèvre, who has been director of dance at the Paris Opera since 1995, he will be starting at his new position in September this year. Millepied, who was born in Bordeaux and trained at the Lyon Conservatory, retired as a dancer in 2011, and has since been focussing on choreography. His appointment comes amidst much speculation, as it is highly unusual for someone from the outside to occupy such a high and coveted position and run the company. Let's wait and watch.

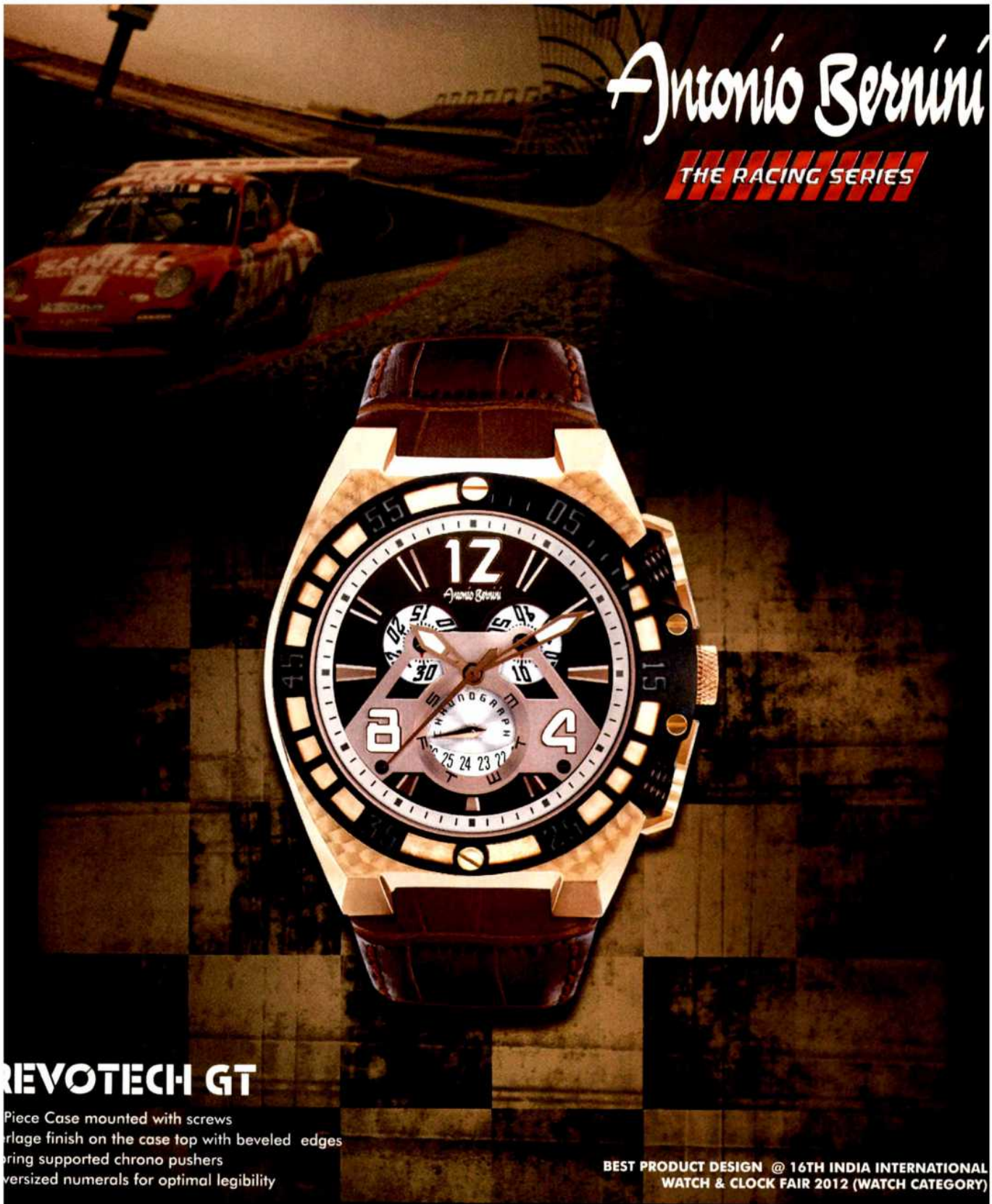
JAMES TURRELL IN 2013



Described by Michael Govan, director of the LA County Museum of Art as an artist whose work is known but rarely seen, 70-year-old James Turrell will be showcasing his first exhibition at the Guggenheim in New York since 1980. Slated to run between June 21 and September 25 this year, the artist's long-awaited showcase will focus on his groundbreaking explorations into the field of perception, light, colour, and space, offering a fresh perspective on the space enclosed within the dome of the Guggenheim. Essentially, this new project will inundate the space within the museum with shifting light, and transform it dramatically. Putting a spin on American architect Frank Lloyd Wright's iconic structure, the exhibition reinterprets the air and light occupying the museum's central void, forcing visitors to reimagine the building within these new parameters. Aside from New York, the artist will also be showing at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art on May 26th and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston from April 7th right up till August 18th.

CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF

In the latest revival of Tennessee Williams's Pulitzer Prize winning Cat On a Hot Tin Roof, director Rob Ashford's 2013 rendition opened on the night of January 18th at the Richard Rodgers Theatre in New York and will be staged almost everyday up until the last performance on March 30. Starring Benjamin Walker as protagonist Brick, alongside Scarlett Johansson as Maggie, and Ciarán Hinds in the role of Big Daddy, the audience has enough to feast its eyes on. Stellar cast aside, critics have applauded Ashford for preserving Tennessee's vision, and keeping intact all the melodramatics originally intended by its writer. Tickets are available at the venue or online.



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LENOVO THINKPAD HELIX

This whipsmart laptop features an 11.6-inch detachable screen and runs on Windows 8. It combines the functionality of a business laptop with the mobility of a tablet. With up to 10 hours of battery life and digitiser pen input, the Helix is a good option to work, share or browse on the go.
Price: ₹79,500 (approx)

SMARTWATCH BY PEBBLE

Its makers call it the world's first smartwatch. You can choose from various watchfaces, download apps, get notifications, store data and even chat using the easy-to-use interface.
Price: ₹24,850

CANALI FLIP FLOPS

Flip flops are no longer uncool. In fact, taking dressing to new heights are these designer braided flip-slops and sandals. Constructed in Italy using fine calf-skin leather, these not only ensure comfort in the heat, but also keep you looking dapper. Pair them with linen trousers or printed shorts.
Price: On request

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PARROT ZIK

These headphones combine form and function with cutting-edge, touch-based technology and super-comfortable, beautifully-crafted over-the-ear Bluetooth headphones. It changes the volume or track and lets you take calls, at the flick of a finger. Parrot has also thrown in head detection controls; simply take them off to pause the music! Price on request

OAKLEY AIRWAVE

For your next trip on the slopes, pick a pair of Oakley airwave snow goggles that come with anti-fog lenses, in-built bluetooth music controls that transmit information to a heads-up display.
Price: ₹31,824

OSIM UDIVINE

After a long day at work, an effective massage chair is a worthy treat. The uDivine is a good investment that apart from a full-body massage, also streams music from a plugged-in iPod, via speakers built into the sides of the headrest. Bliss.
Price: ₹3.5 lakh

ADVERTISEMEN

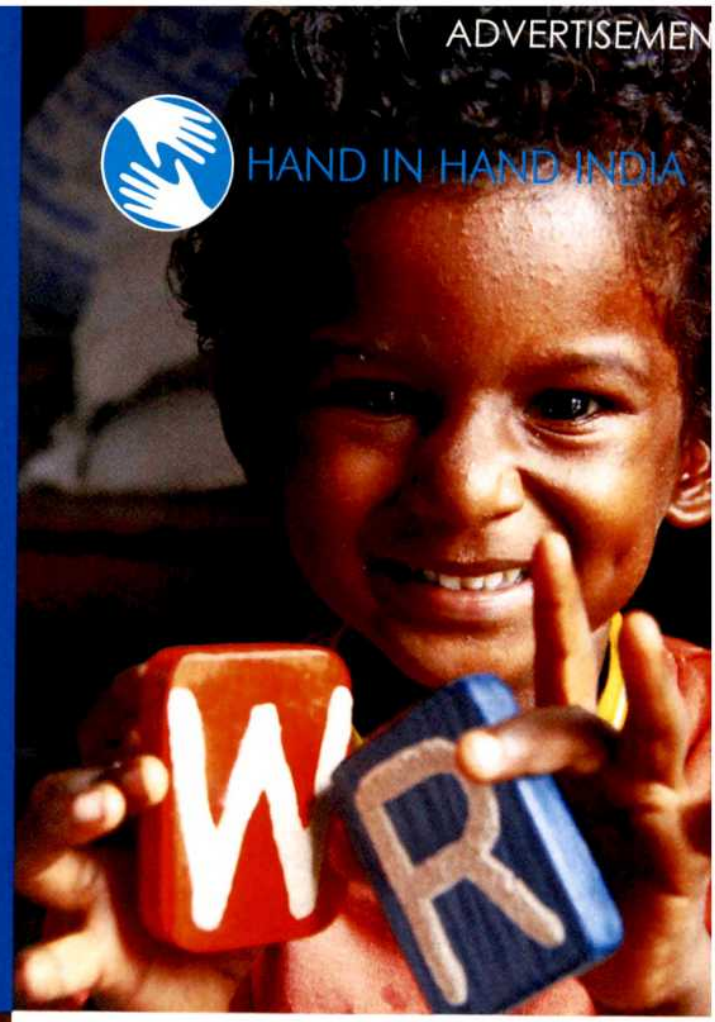
10 YEARS & A MILLION SMILES

Adopting an integrated approach, Hand in Hand India, a development organisation, has been striving to alleviate poverty through its Five Pillar Programme in the areas of education, women's empowerment & microfinance, health, environment, and information technology and governance. From humble beginnings in Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu, the organisation has spread its operations to Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Puducherry. Its model has been replicated in Afghanistan, South Africa, Kenya, Brazil and Cambodia.

1.3 million jobs created

1,000 child-friendly panchayats

243,763 people benefitted through medical camps



The RiTE to Education

Hand in Hand India's Child Labour Elimination Programme through education works towards mainstreaming child labourers and enrolling out-of-school children in regular schools.

Sowing the Seeds of Self-Reliance

With the backing of Hand in Hand India's microfinance programme, capacity building training, and enterprise creation initiatives, marginalised women have emerged as change agents in their communities.

Web of Opportunities

Bridging the urban-rural digital divide, the Citizens' Centre Enterprises are helping rural communities reap the benefits of the digital age. The social component of this initiative focuses on promoting grass-roots level democracy in villages.

Health for All

Basic health care services continue to elude large parts of rural India. The health interventions of Hand in Hand India focuses on providing the rural population access to basic health care.

Green Guardians

Through a combination of effective solid waste management practices and natural resource management projects, Hand in Hand India is striving for greener pastures.

Uplifting Communities

Hand in Hand India's Village Uplift Programme is designed to create and build self-reliant communities that bring about an integrated development in villages.

A Merc Like No Other

Mercedes does not have an entry-level SUV. So, it has come up with the next best recipe—a mini MPV—to take on the likes of the Audi Q3 and the BMW X1. But, can it?

BY VIKRANT SINGH | PHOTOS: PAWAN DAGIA

It's not the recipe most would have expected Mercedes to cook up. A slightly odd MPV-looking car to take on crossovers (badged as SUVs) from its competitors certainly doesn't come across as a foolproof plan. But then, a lack of options meant Mercedes had to do its innovative best to matter in the segment. Here then, is its new B-class.

It has a tall roof line, an almost van-like profile and a wide, hatchback-like rear. It isn't a car one would lust after, however with the unique headlamp treatment, the well defined shoulder, sill lines and the rounded profile of its rear along with the twin pipes, the 'B' does stand out, in a good way. The trick here is to look at it long and hard so that you begin to understand and appreciate the design for what it is.

Mercedes has got one thing absolutely spot on though—the interiors. Unlike entry-level offerings from its competitors, Audi in particular, which look cheaper than the rest of the range, the B-class feels like any other Mercedes on the inside. The quality, the look and feel of plastics and the fit and finish is top class. The choice of colours—be it for the wood inserts or the finish for the aluminium outlines—all feel terrifically upmarket. The equipment list is long too and there's nearly everything here that you get in the C-class avant-garde model, from electric seats with memory to the COMAND system with bluetooth telephony besides safety aids like ESP. In addition, it gets a reversing camera and a fancier display screen.

The B-class is also more spacious. In fact, it is roomier than even the BMW X1 and the Audi Q3, which are its direct competition. There's more head and shoulder room, and the usable knee room in the rear row is greater inside the B-class as well. The Mercedes does fall behind on the comfort front, though. The seats, particularly at the rear, are flat and offer no under thigh support. The seat squabs are a tad small too.

Then there's the ride quality. You will feel every single bump on everything barring a well-rounded speed breaker. The car jiggles over broken tarmac, crashes quite hard and loudly into all sorts of potholes and if there's even a mildly square profile to a bump—it doesn't even have to be high, mind you—the car thumps into it quite harshly. The ride does improve at higher speeds.

SPECS

Engine 1.6-litre 4/inline petrol
Power 122 hp (B180 BlueEFFICIENCY)
LxWxH 4,270 mm x 1,777 mm x 1,603 mm (with standard accesories)
Weight 1,425 kg
Top Speed 190 kmph
0-100 kmph 10.2 seconds
Price ₹21.5 lakhs to ₹25.5 lakhs

(Top to bottom) The B-class's interiors are a notch above the competition and earn it an A-plus for comfort; Paddle shifters make driving easier, although they do not necessarily improve acceleration times; The 1.6 liter inline/4 engine is a capable heart for this crossover

The upside to the poor ride is a nice handling car. The 'B' won't leave you grinning after a short burst on a section of twisties, not with the lack of communication from the steering column, but it doesn't feel loose, ponderous or scary when you push it close to the car's limit. The more you drive it, the more you begin trusting its dynamic capabilities. It is also very stable in a straight line under hard braking.

Now the not so good news for high mileage users. The B is currently only available with a petrol engine. This is, thankfully, a very good engine. The four cylinder 1.6-litre is turbocharged and gets direct injection and variable valve timing. As a result it develops a max power output of 122bhp and the peak torque of 200Nm available from a truly low 1250rpm.

The engine is also butter smooth and loves to be revved. It has a sporty note and along with the paddle shifters to work the seven-speed dual clutch sport automatic box, it is quite enjoyable when driven hard. As we noted earlier however, speed and acceleration are not its forte. It takes more than 10 seconds to go from zero to 100kmph. The upside of this is the decent fuel consumption. The 'B' takes in about 10kmpl in the city and averages more than 15kmpl on the highway.

If only the the B-class was given a more SUV-like form factor, it could well have been a hit. The space utilisation is superb, the quality, the look and feel and even the equipment on board is as good as what you would find on the more expensive Mercedes. And it is certainly better than what the competition offers.

The advantage of course is that it is more compact than its competitors making it a better fit if you live with within cramped city limits. In fact, even in the shape it is now, and given its capable petrol engine, it still makes a great buy for those looking for the snob value of a tristar on your hood, spacious and versatile interiors, pampering equipment but short commutes with an occasional long drive. ■

Ernest Borel,

Swiss watches since 1856, unveils its Retro collection in India

A classic heritage with a glorious future. For lovers of retro watches from the early decades of the 20th century, Ernest Borel has come up with its collection of Retro watches in India. Through 155 years of experience and tradition, Ernest Borel has always relied on its values to keep on innovating. Further to its155thAnniversary Celebration, the romantic brand is launching an upgraded version of its Retro Collection. The collection is inspired from their charming Aqua Marine collection from the 1940's. The collection is a tribute to the beauty and the immensity of the ocean.

www.ernestborel.ch

Retro is all about a throwback to past styling. Ernest Borel's watches are exciting for people who remember them first time round or youngsters that love the eye-catching design of these classics. The retro styling still looks as innovative today as it did in the 70's. The inspiration of the collection aqua marina is a transparent semi-precious stone with a beautiful sea-water color, recalling its name, especially blending in the sunlight. The timepiece has a Swiss made quartz movement and a stainless steel case. The diameter of the case is 31 mm. The timepiece is designed with anti- reflection sapphire crystal, with a water resistance up t0 50 meters.

According to legend, Aqua Marina is also the Love Stone. In its pursuit of passion and happiness, Ernest Borel has decided to give new birth to the creative style of the Aqua Marina collection. As the Lover's trademark, the new Retro Collection perfectly represents Ernest Borel's heritage, with natural elegance and classical style emanating from this beautiful timepiece.

The retro collection is available for both ladies and gents and displays hour and minute with genuine leather straps or stainless steel bracelet. As watch collecting gains momentum the world over, this collection is being sought by collectors, so get in whilst you can.

About Ernest Borel

Ernest Borel watches – a guarantee of Swiss Quality with a spirit of romance. For more than a century, and thanks to its rich history and tradition, Ernest Borel has succeeded in building an image of Romance and Elegance. Ernest Borel collections cater for the medium to high-end markets, offering a wide range of products, in particular romantic couple watches. Alongside these classic and fashionable timepieces, it also produces sports models and a superior range of complication watches as well as certified chronometers recognized via the official seal of the Contrôle Officiel Suisse des Chronomètres (COSC) (Official Swiss Chronometer Testing Institute). A testament to its quality, Ernest Borel was rewarded by becoming one of the top brands to receive COSC certification in 2009.

Ernest Borel's watchmakers and designers strive ceaselessly to create new collections, blending cutting-edge technology with meticulous attention to detail to satisfy customers pursuing perfection, fashion and romance.

Lemon Tree Premier, HITEC City, Hyderabad

Where work meets fun!

This hotel is one of Hyderabad's most refreshing upscale business hotels. Take our word for it. Lemon Tree Premier is in the heart of HITEC City and is walking distance from TCS, HSBC, Deloitte, Dell and a host of other corporate offices.

On entering the hotel, we were surprised by the fresh lemon fragrance, bright interiors and contemporary artwork. And if you want to cheer yourself up... all you need to do is read the joke mats, baby t-shirts and jokes on the walls. They brought a smile to our face, every time, regardless of how stressful a day we had.

Their cheerful staff made us feel at home and went out of their way to make us comfortable. What was even more amazing was watching the hearing and speech impaired staff engage happily with guests in the coffee shop. Truly delightful.

Lemon Tree Premier offers 267 stylish rooms. These bright and spacious rooms actually let you have a good night's sleep. What works is the orthopedic mattress, excellent sound insulation and near-perfect black-out curtains. The rooms are WiFi equipped and have a great workstation with a comfortable chair.

The hotel's conference facilities are just what you need. Their team is energetic and cheerful which makes this a popular conference venue as well as wedding/social events venue.

The 24x7 multi-cuisine coffee shop - Citrus Café offers a large variety of Indian and International cuisines. Their recreation bar – Slounge was our favorite hangout to unwind in – we tried out the PlayStation, pool and listened to our favorite tunes. We checked out their award winning specialty restaurant - Republic of Noodles. We totally agree with its reputation of serving the most authentic pan-Asian street food.

Lemon Tree Premier offers great options to relax and rejuvenate like the Fresco spa, the Life Fitness equipped gym and the rooftop swimming pool.

The hotel is just 25 minutes from the railway station and 45 minutes from the airport.

Rolling Through The

As the Wraith makes a comeback at the 2013 Geneva Motor Show, we go back in time and trace the evolution of Rolls-Royce' icons.

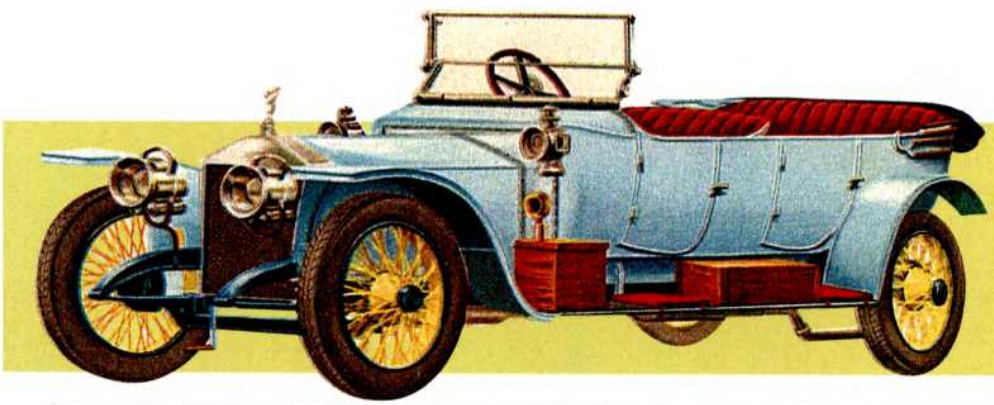
BY ANUSHREE BASU-BHALLA

It has been more than a century since the first Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost rolled off the company's assembly line. From then on, the Spirit of Ecstasy that adorns every Rolls-Royce hood has become a globally-recognised symbol for the ultimate in luxury.

Since 1904, after the engineer-and-businessman duo Charles Rolls and Henry Royce formed their motoring marquee, the company has championed advanced automobile manufacturing, even as it sticks to the traditional practice of building each automobile mostly by hand.

India's love affair with Rolls-Royce began in 1913 when the seventh Nizam of Hyderabad—the then richest man in the world—Mir Osman Ali Khan, got one customised and shipped for his personal use. The elegant car was a rich canary yellow and had gold mountings and a silver-finished roof that was custom-designed for the Nizam. For India, which was still a British colony at the time, it was the moment that marked the arrival of the first imported car for an Indian customer. Today there are close to 300 Rolls-Royces in the country, ever since the company re-entered the Indian luxury market in 2005.

Cars produced by Rolls-Royce are an engineering marvel; one still-functioning Silver Ghost from way back in 1907 is a fitting example. As the company rolls out a glimpse of its latest endeavour—the manic-looking Wraith 2013, we take a look at some of Rolls-Royce's most iconic creations and their auto-evolution, over the last century.



1907

Silver Ghost

It had a six-cylinder engine inside a silver four-passenger chassis. The 40 horsepower (hp) car stayed in production until 1925 and could be driven upto 15,000 miles.

'ears

Each Rolls- Royce automobile passes through 60 pairs of highly-skilled hands before it is presented to its owner

Every Rolls-Royce vehicle is built by hand at the company's state-of-the-art headquarters at Goodwood, England. Designed by renowned British architect Sir Nicholas Grimshaw, the building was built to be environmentally-friendly.

1912

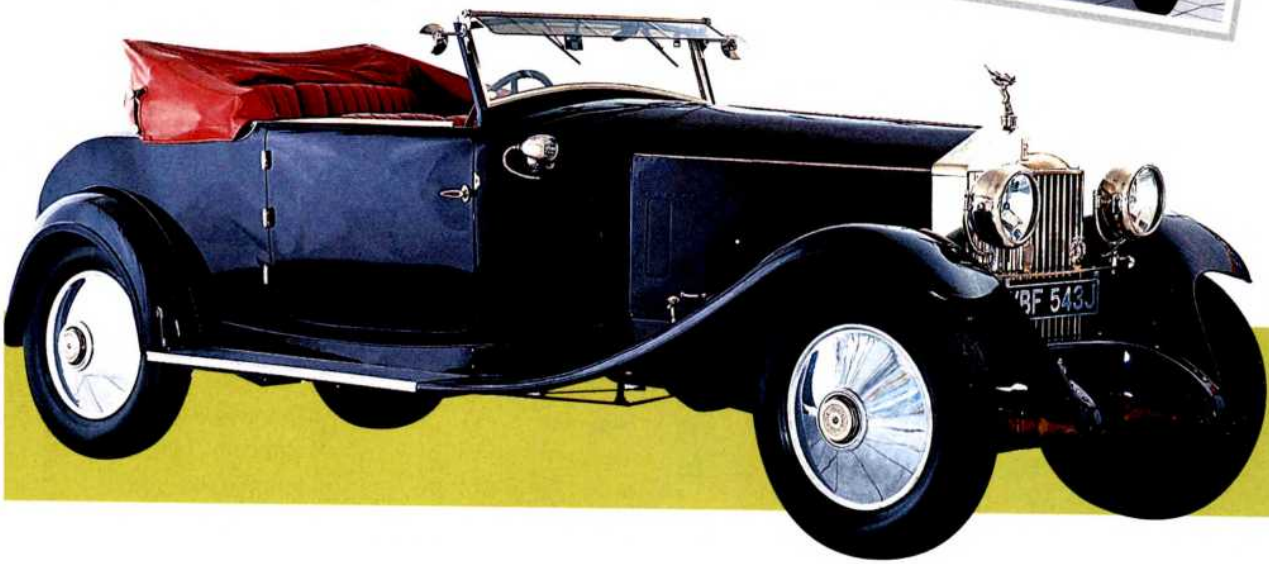
Double Pullman

This still-functional Silver Ghost variant limousine is powered by a massive 7.3-litre engine. In 2012, it went under the hammer at an auction which fetched its owner a whopping £4.7 million

1925

Phantom

This four-door sedan came with two transmission options: 3- or 4-speed manual gears. In addition, Rolls-Royce added some muscle by installing a 7.7-litre engine that delivered 95 hp and a topspeed of 145 kmph.



1971

Corniche

The 70s proved to be a momentous year for the company as it split operations between aeronautics and automobiles. During this time, Rolls-Royce produced a stylish two-door coach-built Corniche that was based on the Silver Shadow. Only 1,306 Corniches were manufactured.

1934

Phantom II Continental

This three-position drophead variant of the Phantom came with distinct bodywork and a shorter wheelbase that was envisioned for that obssessive, self-driving customer. Like all Phantoms, the Continental was also exceptionally well equipped. It had an automatic oiling, servo-assisted mechanical drum brakes and electronic shock absorbers.

1946

Silver Wraith

Post World War II, Rolls-Royce relaunched the custom-bodied, extended wheelbase Silver Wraith. A predecssor of the latest Wraith, it initially came with a 4.2 litre six-cyllinder engine. This was later increased to 4.5 litres due to customer demand.

1965

Silver Shadow

The swinging sixties saw Rolls-Royce appeal to a new breed of owners who fewer less frills and more function. Silver Shadow was the first Rolls to feature a monocoque chassis. Its topspeed was limited to 118 mph although it was capable of producing upto 220 hp at 4,500rpm.

1985

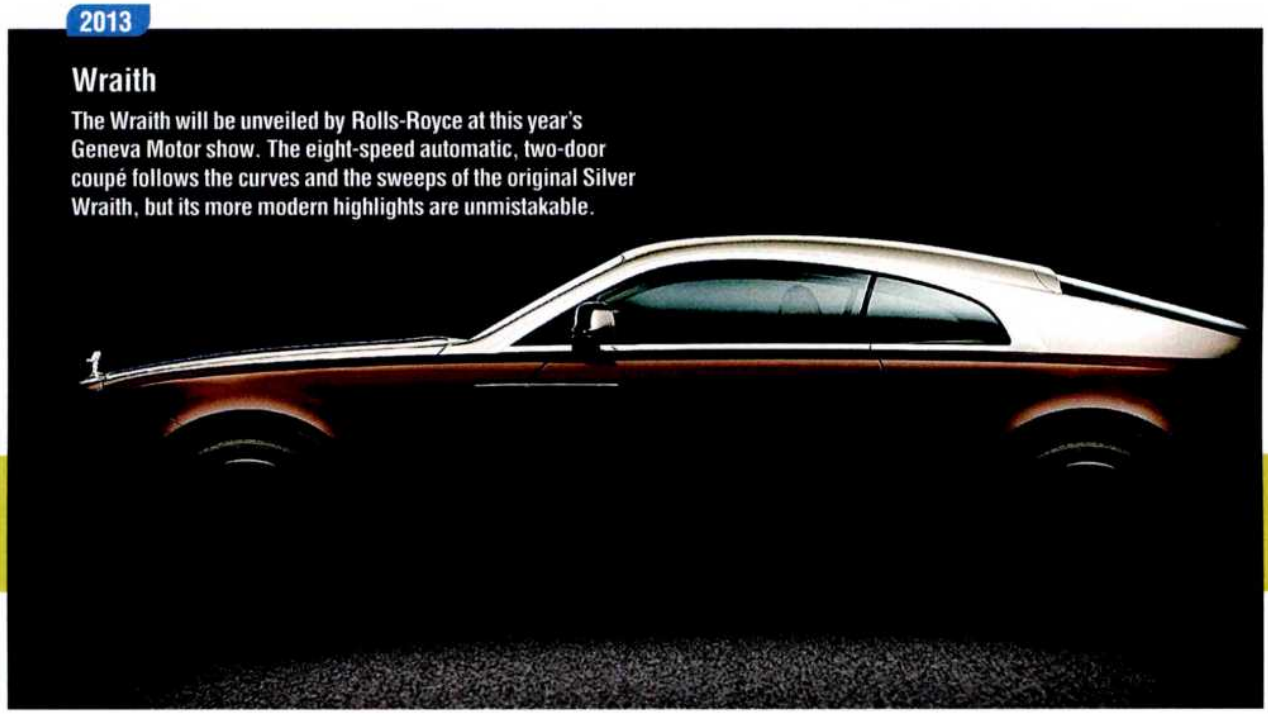
Silver Spirit

The Silver Spirit was launched in 1985 under the renamed Rolls-Royce Motor Cars Limited brand. The Silver Spirit took the Silver Shadow floor pan as its design blueprint, but clothed it in a body that was both more contemporary and elegant.

2013

Wraith

The Wraith will be unveiled by Rolls-Royce at this year's Geneva Motor show. The eight-speed automatic, two-door coupé follows the curves and the sweeps of the original Silver Wraith, but its more modern highlights are unmistakable.



2011

Ghost

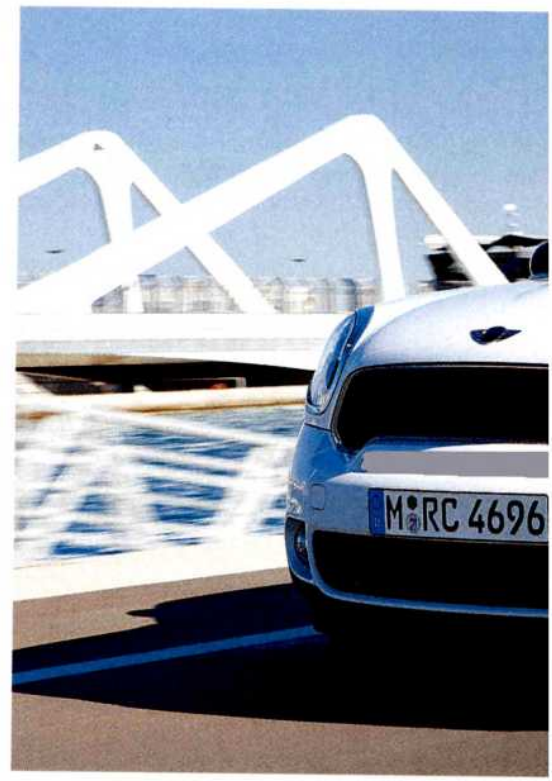
Owned by the BMW Group since the 90s, the Ghost captures the essence of Rolls-Royce in its simplest, purest form. Its 6.6-litre V12 generates a stunning 563 horsepower. It's available in India for ₹3.5 crore (ex-showroom Mumbai).

2012

Phantom Series II

Combining state-of-the-art technology with timeless design, this second generation of Phantoms came in several variants: an Extended Wheelbase; a Drophead Coupé; and a Coupé. It exudes the motoring confidence of the legendary British marquee. This machine will set you back upwards of ₹5.3 crore (ex-showroom Mumbai).

HIDDEN GEMS



When you think premium cars, you automatically think BMWs, Audis and Mercedes. Here's a look at five underrated vehicles in this segment.
Pierre Fitter with AutoBild India

TOYOTA LAND CRUISER

Toyota doesn't make them any bigger than this. The Land Cruiser traces it lineage back to 1951 as Japan struggled to recover from World War II. What started as a functional all-wheel drive has morphed into a palace on wheels. The Land Cruiser is not subtle, which explains its popularity among certain customers. Don't let their patronage put you off. The 4-litre engine generates 381 bhp and it does 0 to100 kmph in 12 seconds. Inside, you're treated to 14 speakers, four-zone automatic climate control, a superb GPS navigation system, steering wheel controls, a chiller box in the front arm rest and electrical charging ports in the rear. **Price** ₹88 lakh onwards

MINI COUNTRYMAN

The Mini Countryman adds a bit of ruggedness to the famed small car's line up. This variant has been built taller and longer than its urban cousins, to accommodate five adults quite comfortably. The 4-wheel drive option combined with the iconic John Cooper Works upgrade allows you belt out upto 220 bhp for a top speed of 190 kmph. That's quite a speed!

That makes this not-so-little car a great option for longer drives that don't always take smooth roads. Mini lets its customers chose from peronalised paint schemes, interior and equipment packages, optional leather upholstery, automatic climate control, keyless entry, automatic headlights and rain-sensing wipers. Accessories include beautiful 17-inch alloys and ambient lighting. **Price** ₹31 lakh onwards

VOLKSWAGEN PHAETON

The Phaeton is 'exhibit A' on the list of most underrated luxury cars. It was designed to exacting standards under the direction of no less than VW chairman Ferdinand Piech himself. Reportedly, one such standard was being able to drive all day at 300 kmph with an exterior temperature of 50 °C and a cabin temperature of 22 degrees Celsius. Built by hand at VW's 'transparent factory' in Dresden, every Phaeton is unique. Officials say the level of customisation is "limited only by a client's fantasy and finances." Nineteen-inch LCD screens, humidors for cigars and even a fridge are all items that have been requested and installed for buyers. What's more, VW even allows you to visit the factory and install your own steering wheel and driver's seat. **Price** ₹76 lakh onwards

VOLVO XC90

While they have always enjoyed a reputation as makers of some of the world's safest cars, in India, for some strange reason, Volvo has not yet managed to earn as much recognition for the premium quality it puts into them. With that said, Volvo's seven-seater, crossover XC90 deserves a thorough second look. In terms of safety, the car is understandably unmatched (a whiplash protection system, energy absorbing interiors and a roll cage are standard accessories). Where the car truly begins to stand out is its luxury trims. An electric cooler-cum-heater box in the back, twin screens for passengers seated in the middle row, cabin air quality monitoring and leather upholstery all combine to make for a very comfortable, and safe, ride. **Price** ₹43 lakh onwards.

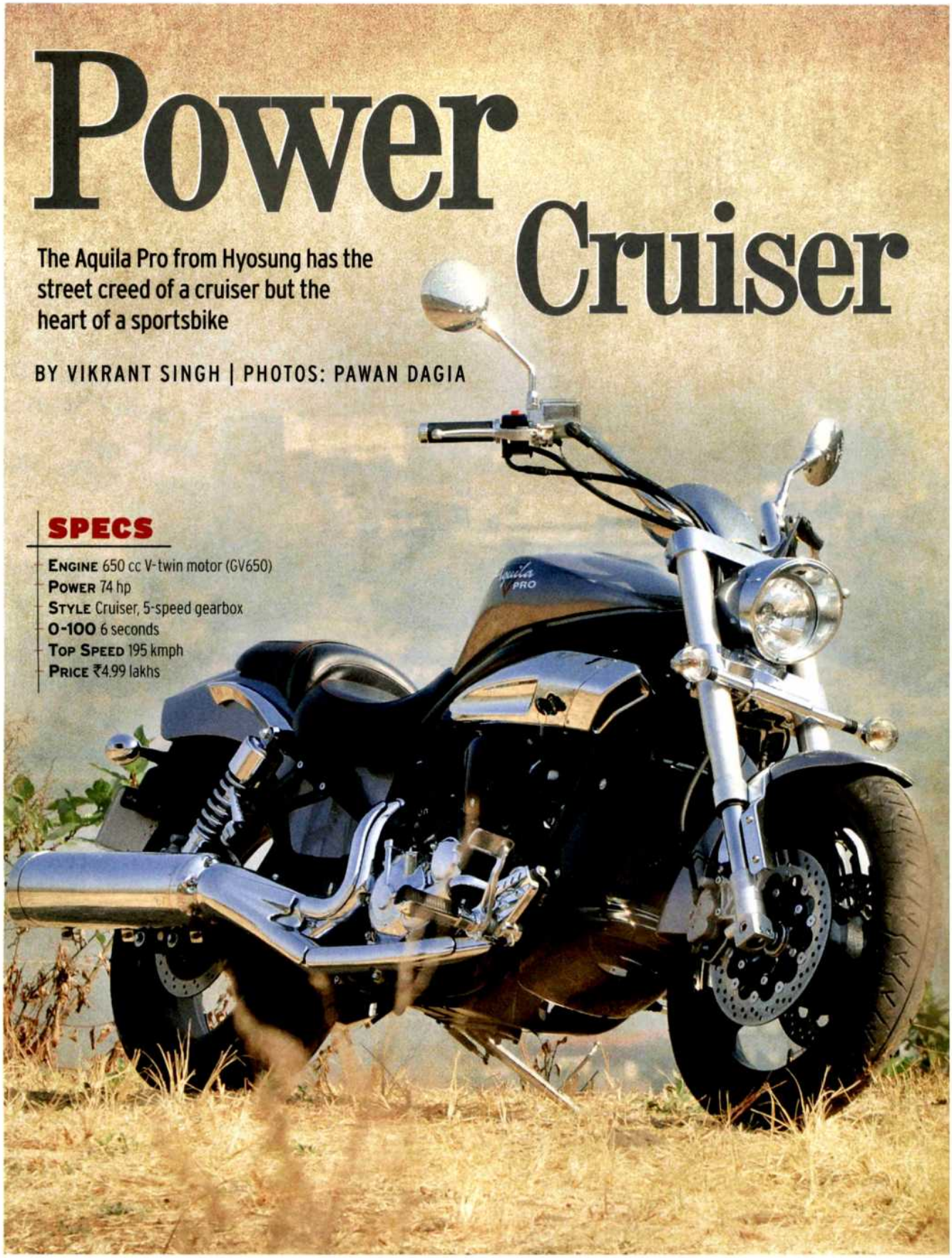
NISSAN 370Z

Continuing its 40-year tradition, the Nissan 370z is a surprisingly good sports coupe. Let's start with the look. Its quotation-mark shaped head- and tail-lights enclose a body that screams one word—speed. The 3.7 litre V6 belts out 332 horsepower for an electronically-limited top speed of 250 kmph. Inside, aluminium pedals, knee pads for both occupants and smooth, understated leather trims make you feel like you are sitting in a true-blue racer. Tilt the steering column and you tilt the entire instrument cluster as well, improving visibility for drivers of all heights. Add to that power seats with lumbar support and numerous storage bins to augment the boot, and you have a capable, comfortable, convenient sports car that makes you look good without breaking the bank. **Price** ₹53 lakh onwards

Power Cruiser

The Aquila Pro from Hyosung has the street creed of a cruiser but the heart of a sportsbike

BY VIKRANT SINGH | PHOTOS: PAWAN DAGIA



SPECS

- **Engine** 650 cc V-twin motor (GV650)
- **Power** 74 hp
- **Style** Cruiser, 5-speed gearbox
- **0-100** 6 seconds
- **Top Speed** 195 kmph
- **Price** ₹4.99 lakhs

I'm not feeling too well. My head's throbbing and my limbs ache. The last thing I want to do now is ride a motorcycle. And yet here I am outside the showroom waiting for my ride to be carted out. Good news is, I won't be stuck in a fetal position all day long, for my ride today is a brand new cruiser from DSK Hyosung and not some race replica. Thank god for small mercies. Badged the Aquila Pro but also called the GV650, this is DSK Hyosung's second such offering in India; the first of course was the ST7.

So while I don all my protective gear, I notice the soft, padded and low slung seat along with the pulled-back handlebar and the forward set footpegs. Instantly, I know things have begun to look up. As per the route we have planned to take today, we are only going to have nicely paved, straight stretches of road all the way through our final photography location.

What I wasn't so sure about was how easy (or cumbersome) the GV650 would be to negotiate traffic with. After all, it weighs 240kg and has a 1,670 mm long wheelbase. Surprisingly, once on the move, you don't feel its weight. And thanks to the low seat height one can also have both feet planted firmly on the ground when you're stuck in bumper to bumper traffic.

However, my happiness is short lived for we have arrived at the foothills of a location we generally use when shooting sports-oriented motorcycles; motorcycles that revel

(Clockwise from top-left) **The 650 cc, water-cooled, V-twin dishes out 74 hp; The clean instrument panel is easy to read even with a quick glance; sticky Bridgestone Battlax tyres and twin disc brakes give you a solid grip on things**

in cornering carving, hard braking and quick turn-ins. Of course nobody thought it appropriate to inform me. So here I am with a cruiser all stretched and psyched-out to tackle straight roads and I am now staring at an endless stream of corners.

But again, the GV has a surprise in store for me. Actually looking at its hardware, I should have known better. It features upside down front forks with lesser travel but greater diameter than Hyosung's earlier model, the ST7's. This is all very sportsbike like, if you please. It also has a sticky set of Bridgestone Battlax tyres. So, even though I start following the photographer's car (which is going at a decent clip) apprehensively trying to get a feel of things around bends, I find myself at its tail without even trying. Yes, the GV can corner!

It even changes direction without much effort, turns in nicely and manages to hold its line much better than the ST7. Crucially, given the chaotic traffic we often find even on Indian highways, it is more tolerant of mid-corner corrections.

Sure, you can feel the chassis flex under you and a bumpy corner does seem to threaten to wash the front wide, but never in an abrupt way that might catch you unawares and send you careening. It is actually quite a tidy bike around bends. The only limiting factor in all this is the lean angles you are forced to adopt because the footpegs tend to scrape the road a bit too easily.

We also quite like the motor which is borrowed from Hyosung's sportsbike, the GT650R. So, there's no lazy revving, low-end torquey characteristic to the GV that is typical of cruiser. It in fact, urges you to wind it up all the way to the red line and rely on power and high revs for a higher turn of speed and acceleration. Interestingly, the engine feels smoother on the GV than on the GT and you don't mind giving it the stick repeatedly. And to control all that acceleration, the GV's twin disc setup upfront and a single disc at the rear feel adequate. These bite hard and yet there is enough feel to tell you how much to lean on them before your wheels lock up dangerously.

The GV650 is a much nicer bike than the ST7 and is competitively priced to boot. It is comfortable, fast, and with good, dynamic ability backing it. Overall, it feels well-finished and is as much at home driving in a city as it is taking on intercity travel. In fact, we'd go so far as to say it is a great alternative to the Harley-Davidson Iron 883, the bike GV has so firmly in its sights. ■

No Smoke without Fire

Fire up the grill, beckon your hungry cronies and bring the party to your backyard.

BY R PALLAVI

Suspended over glowing embers, succulent slabs of meat are ready to be seared; the briquettes of charcoal creak as they expand with the heat and release smoky aromas that trickle down the meat, imparting gently burnt flavours to the food. Pitmaster or backyard wannabe, the barbecue chef has created magic, and is the hero of the day.

Setting up a barbecue, especially an orthodox charcoal one, demands some care. Then, your patience is litmus-tested as it takes a fair bit of time for the meat to acquire that droolworthy crimson glow. But, barbecues run on a simple human philosophy: "It's better to have burnt and lost, then never to have barbecued at all." This might well have been another of the Bard's profound epiphanies.

The most dramatic symbolism of American family life, barbecuing marks the onset of summer out west. Here in the Indian tropics though, balmy afternoon winds make it an early winter or an almost-spring activity, at least when you live up in the north.

You can typically barbecue in three ways: over charcoal pieces, wood-fired grills and gas fired grills. In charcoal grilling, the buzzword is compressed hardwood pallets which are loaded into

The Unold 58550 black rack barbecue grill is easy to operate and smokes up your meats in no time.

a hopper and then fed into a firebox at the bottom of the grill via a thermostat-controlled electric auger. These burn at anywhere between 37°–65° celsius on smoke mode and can be amped up to a maximum of 232° –260° C for searing tougher meat. Lava rocks are a good alternative to charcoal briquettes, if you find any available.

Wood firing too is popular and fruit wood planks are the next big thing. Apple, apricot, plum, peach and nectarine are good for poultry and pork; citrus woods like lemon and orange give out moderate smoke that gives a light fruity flavour and is great for vegetables, fruits and fish. Fascinatingly, hard meats are also believed to attain a rich velvety depth when grilled over whisky barrel wood. Even the wood-fired oven, whose purpose of existence seemed limited to the growing popularity of bruschettas and pizzas, is great for roasting, grilling and baking. Finally, for amateurs, there's always the clean and convenient option of gas-fired barbecues or the even less messy electric induction ranges that also deliver good results.

Indians may have drawn stylistic inferences from the west, but Mughlai cuisine is not new to the open flame method. Today, the sigri and the tandoor are being modified into top of the range grill systems making tikkas and kebabs a lot easier to whip up at home.

While hand-me-down recipes and local techniques still do the rounds, contemporary chefs are laying out new rules for the game. Chef Ashish Rai, regional head at Barbeque Nation feels, "Foods with high starch content and firm texture like potatoes, carrots, sweet potatoes and pineapples are best suited for barbecuing. The trick to a good barbecue is controlled heat, pressure and constant marinating." Others like Nimish Bhatia, corporate executive chef at The Lalit Hotels shares two tips to a good barbecue. First, spray vinegar to open pores of raw meat and allow the flavours to infuse. Second, steer clear of frozen meat because only fresh and supple meat will absorb the marination. For chef Theodor Rudiferia, executive chef DoubleTree by Hilton, New Delhi, one must barbecue slightly less than the amount you want your meat cooked because you should always let the cut

TOOL BOX

1 Wire Mesh

Should be a low carbor galvanised wire roughly the width of a shoulder. Always chose a large mesh to utilise the pit fully. These can also be twisted on the sides to fit the pit.

2 Barbecue Tongs

Handles on tongs should start at around 18 inches, about six inches longer than regular kitchen tongs. Avoid wooden handles because these crack or dry out in the heat.

3 Carving Fork

Their offset tines provide better sight line and firmer cuts. It grips the moist meat and helps in transferring the onto a platter, without fiddling with its shape.

4 Skewers

Soak wooden ones in water for 20 to 30 minutes before placing food on them to prevent charring or burning. Always separate foods that cook quickly from those that take longer to cook.

5 Marinade Brush

A silicone brush works better than synthetic or plastic ones that tend to melt. The length should be about 15 inches so it reaches the back of the grill easily.

GRILL EM' UP

Short Loin

To grill as a roast, you should tie up the tenderloin into an even, round roast so that it cooks evenly. Sear the roast on medium hot grill just long enough to lightly brown the surface. Grill Time An indirect grilling for about 15 to 20 mins till it reaches 48° C and let it rest for 15 mins.

Round Steak

Braising or pot roasting on low heat while covered until the meat is fork-tender. Grill Time Around 2 hours. Use a meat thermometer to ensure the temperature is between 62° to 76° C.

Spare Ribs

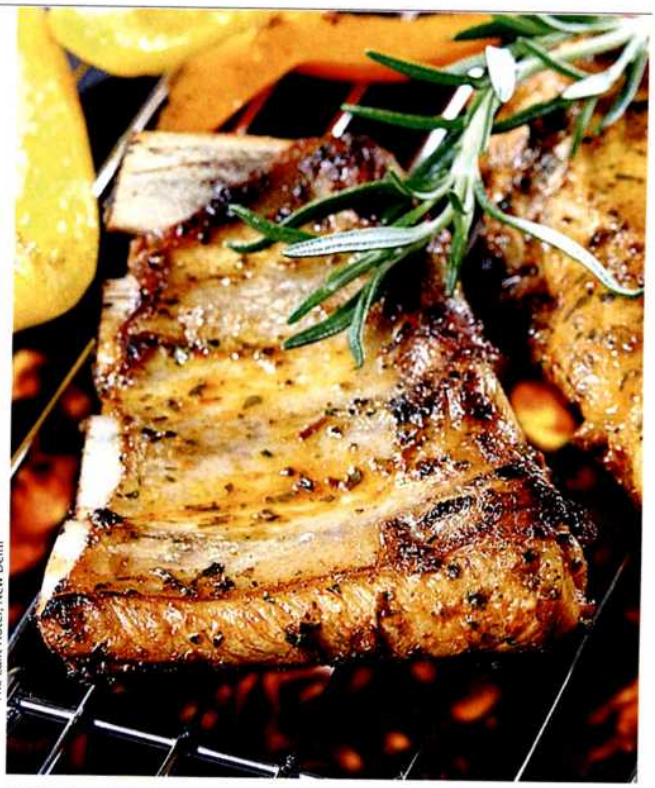
Best cooked over dry heat, with a gourmet sauce and plenty of resting to lock the juices inside. Grill Time Indirectly at medium heat, about 160°C to 175° C for 2 to 3 hrs.

Sirloin Steak

Normally recommended for slow cooking, but can be medium grilled such that it has a thick band of pink in the centre and brown on the side. Grill Time For a 2.5 cm thick steak, grill each side for about 2 min for rare, 3 min for medium and 4 min for well done.

Serving Suggestion

Barbequeing tends to dry up your food, so aside from marinating, you also need to slather it with an acidic lemon, yogurt or a salsa sauce to keep it moist and juicy.



The Lalit Hotel, New Delhi

A shiny layering of marination over piping hot ribs is a popular barbecue treat

rest for 10 minutes. While resting, it is still cooking in its own flavours thanks to residual heat.

Vegetarians too have ample options to play around with at the grill. The omnipresent cottage cheese chunks squashed between bell pepper and pink onion are outdated. Varieties of exotic cheese are the new craze. The Canadian Guernsey Girl cheese acquires a chewy pliability on the inside and retains a crunchy firm exterior despite the intense heat. Another great choice is a French Brie where the upper rind turns a golden brown while the rich milky inner turns gooey. For burgers and hot dogs, try a slice of camembert or cheddar.

Blame it on popular American culture or just desperate taste buds, but a barbecue luncheon calls for a generous outpouring of beer, preferably the kind that wears a thick foamy crown. The full-bodied Sierra Nevada Pale Ale has hints of cinnamon and fruit whereas the rich golden Budweiser Budvar Dark Lager leaves trails of roasted coffee. Both are fitting tributes to a barbecue lunch. For the more Indian laal mas doused in its fiery hot spices, there's always the Thornbridge Jaipur India Pale Ale.

Of course, you can always charm with wine. Uncork a Cabernet Sauvignon for medium grilled seafood and diced vegetables; or a Chardonnay or Zinfandel to go with a well-done lamb or pork steak. The spiced grapefruit notes of the Gewurztraminers or a Riesling pair well with pungent Indian fare. So, pat on the coal dust, get your palms greasy and let live cooking teach you that food, like life, is always about the experience. ■

HEALTH SNIPPETS

Sneeze Police

Did you know there is a right way and a wrong way to cover your nose as you sneeze? Here's an explainer.

The idea of covering your nose when you sneeze originated during the days of the Black Death. Back then, it was thought you would lose your soul through a sneeze. The belief was that cupped hands prevented your soul from escaping your body; and would save your life.

Modern science has taught us that what covering your nose really does is it prevents others around you from catching your cold. And yet, we've noticed how one sick employee can quickly turn into a minor office epidemic. There's a very good reason for that. The old 'cupped hands method' is simply not as effective as everyone previously believed it was.

For one, cupped hands simply do not block all of the —there is no polite way to say this —spray. A recent episode of Mythbusters on the Discovery Channel demonstrated that it was actually the least effective of three widely used methods to cover up.

Two, even if you do immediately go to wash your hands after a sneeze, there is a high possibility residual that bacteria has be transferred to surfaces such as taps or bathroom doors before you can even clean them.

Handkerchiefs blocked most of the spray, but by virtue of being in your pocket all day, did not prevent the later spread of germs.

The new method being taught to children in schools around the world is the 'elbow sneeze'. Not only is it the most effective of the three methods at blocking off the 'spray', it also keeps germs localised to a part of the body that doesn't come in contact with surfaces while you try to clean up.

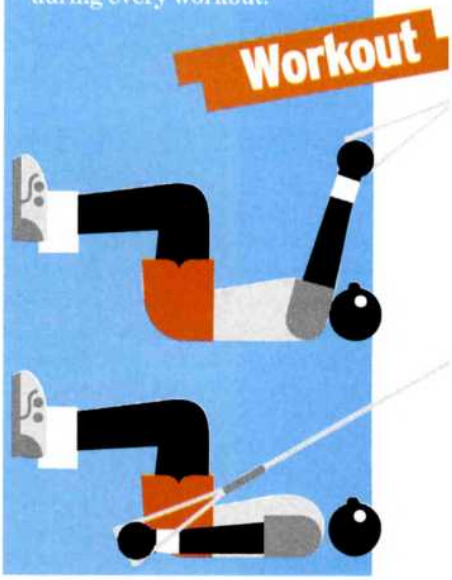
The obvious drawback with this method is the stain it can leave on your suit. Ideally you would avoid this by staying at home when you're ill and not putting your colleagues in sick bay. But you're the road warrior. So keep disposable tissues handy and avoid those Armanis when you catch the flu. Oh, and before we forget, an "excuse me" after a sneeze, is a welcome touch.

Men'sHealth

POSTURE POLICE: ZIP UP YOUR CORE

Anchor a resistance band so that the ends hang about two feet off the floor. Lie on your back in front of the band and grab the handles with your arms straight Bend your hips and knees a little more than 90 degrees and lift your feet off the ground together.

With your arms straight, pull the handles to your sides and hold them. Inhale through your nose without shrugging your shoulders or tensing your neck (you should feel air filling your lower back, which should not arch), and exhale as forcefully as you can through your mouth. Without releasing the band, complete 10 slow inhales and exhales. Release your arms back above your head. That's 1 repetition. Do 3 sets of 2 to 5 reps during every workout.



THE E-WORKOUT PARTNER

Noom is a terrific fitness app that combines three key tools to help you stay fit. These include a food tracker, a weight loss planner and an exercise logger. A huge built-in food library covers virtually anything you will eat. Selecting the food to log your meals and count your calories is intuitive and painless. Integrated GPS tracking helps you log your runs and routes on the go. When you're done, you can check your time per kilometer, speed throughout the run and calories burned. Noom also lists several dozen other exercises that are just easy to log.

The best bit about this nifty but comprehensive app is that it is free for download on Android devices. A paid monthly subscription version that you can download from within the app offers advanced options to plan and log events more accurately such as scheduling multiple work out sessions each day.

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ALCOHOL & DIET DRINKS: A BAD MIX

A new study on how mixers affect blood alcohol levels has created the ultimate diet-conscious, social drinker's dilemma. It turns out, alcohol combined with diet mixers leads to higher blood alcohol levels than sugart mixers. In other words, a rum and diet coke would lead to a higher chance of getting pulled over by cops than a regular rum and coke.

Scientists at Northern Kentucky University studied a group of 16 men and women. Each participant was given a measured dose of alcohol that corresponded to their body weight. The dose effectively gave them a blood-alcohol level of 0.8 mg/ litre. Scientists found that the average diet-alcohol drink combination varied dramatically when compared to a similar quanity for regular mixers.

In fact, in some subjects, the corresponding blood alcohol level for diet mixers was 18 per cent higher than regular mixers. The difference would be enough to push you well over the legal limit even if you had not consumed the alcohol quantity normally required to do so.

Scientists believe this is because the digestive system sees sugary drinks as food and absorbs them slower than diet drinks. So while drinking and driving is a big 'NO', you stand a higher chance of staying legal if you junk the diet.

NO BULL JUST WINE

SOURISH BHATTACHARYYA
Food and Wine Writer

A Wine for Your Dal Makhni?

Five Indian wines made in heaven for Indian food

I HAD the good fortune of being a house guest at Sula Vineyards founder-CEO Rajeev Samant's cottage in his Nashik winery not too long ago. One night, we opened a bottle of his yet-to-be-launched flagship Dindori Shiraz, and paired it with the Kolhapuri chicken and phulkas we had for dinner. This is one wine-paired meal that has stuck in my memory.

One of the most divisive issues among Indian foodies is pairing our meals with wine. The quest to join the two began in London when 'curry restaurants' evolved into hipper avatars to distance themselves from their old patrons—the rednecks who doused their gastric vindaloo-fueled fires with chilled beer. To woo deeper pockets, they started to invest in wine lists.

Of course it wasn't easy. For example, English wine writer Charles Metcalf, tried 27,000 pairings over seven months with his wife Kathryn before they wrote their pocket guide for a UK supermarket chain. And that was for relatively bland British food. The matrix is infinitely more complicated for Indian dishes, what with their mind-boggling range of spices and cuisines. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't try. Here are five combinations that work well.

Sula Vineyards Dindori Shiraz 2010 The grapes of this voluptuous red grow in Dindori taluka in Nashik. Its berry flavours and silky tannins go well with dal makhni, shahi paneer, seekh kebabs and of course Kolhapuri chicken. Try and serve at 16-18° C.

Fratelli Wines Sette 2009 This red from Akluj in Maharashtra by Italian master Piero Masi balances the fruitiness of a Cabernet Sauvignon, floral notes of Sangiovese and vanilla flavours from the French oak it matures in. Perfect for your mutton korma and kathal biryani. Serve at 16-18 ° C.

Grover Vineyards Art Collection Viognier 2010 This pleasant white bears aromas of peach, apricot and tropical fruits complimented by floral notes and hint of honey. Just what you'd want with your garlicky yellow dal, or a Parsi dhansak. Serve at 8-10 ° C.

Sula Vineyards Sauvignon Blanc 2011 This crispy white is a no-brainer when paired with Indian food. Enjoy it with a malai murgh tikka, a prawn xacuti, or even a tomato pappu. Serve at 8-10 ° C.

Fratelli Wines Cabernet Sauvignon 2010 Aromas of black cherries and plums strike as you nose this deep red, fruit forward wine with a decently finish. Pair it with your mutton burra, chicken changezi and mixed vegetable jhalfrezi. Serve at 16-18° C.

GOURMET CENTRAL

Tapping Wine & Pop Food

Iredus, the tony foodie hideaway in the corporate heart of Gurgaon, has a couple of tricks up its sleeve. BY ANUSHREE BASU-BHALLA

When it comes to wine, one comes across gimmicks aplenty. The winemakers seduce you with their impressive packaging, flashing vintages, and quirky labels (think, Frank B, a label with a personal message that comes after 'I am only drinking with you because…'). Wine is typically perceived as being a sophisticated drink but that's set to change as Delhi/NCR gets its first taste of wine on tap at Iredus, located in the corporate epicentre of Gurgaon. This rather informal approach to wine suits the location in question. With beer free-flowing across microbreweries and bars in Gurgaon, it's time wine got its due here as well.

As you walk in, you come across what looks like a remodeled industrial space. Metal, in the form of shelves and installations share space with more metal in the form of shiny wine dispensers and chilling cabinets. All this juxtaposed on a canvas of minimal furnishing with bare tabletops and walls. The evening began with a fruity and very French Fernand Engel reserve, one of Iredus' 24 handpicked wines on tap. Some worthy mentions are: a rare Chateau Lafite Rothschild; Ricossa Barolo from Italy; a family-owned label, Torres Coronas, from Spain; and a South African L'avenir Pinotage, among others. Patrons buy a cash card and swipe it on the dispenser with their wine of choice. Servings are in 30, 60, and 125ml. Tipplers can also choose from eight other spirits on tap—from Jim Beam bourbon, Pinky Vodka to Hendricks gin. The food works well in this context as it is a mix of Indian favourites and global finger food. For starters, the tandoori salmon retained its sweetness and also carried hints of its mustard marination. The chicken malai tikka is a staple in Delhi bars and is well done. The hot-hot chicken wings needed some more time on grill.

The industrial interiors of Iredus

Next came the mains, and while the quirky chicken cheese burger pizza would fit in at a diner, here it seemed like an odd inclusion. The flavours though were spot on. Two Rajasthani favourites, junglee chicken and an ominously red laal maans, were authentic in flavour and mercifully restrained in terms of spice. Best enjoyed with garlic naan.

End the meal with the delicate orange and ginger crust cheesecake. The hot orange mocha too is a great option should you want to skip dessert and get a shot of caffeine instead.

The food at Iredus is worth your money but that said, the high point of this restaurant still remains the fresh new concept of wine on tap.

BT MORE RECOMMENDS

- Tandoori salmon, laal maans
- Chicken cheese burger pizza

Meal for two (without alcohol) ₹2500 plus taxes ✆ 0124 4030430

The neon lit bar spins out refreshing fruit cocktails
A juicy treat from Ludus' exhaustive burger menu (Right)

School of Thought

Café Ludus in MGF Mall, Saket, recreates the American high-school in its funky ambience and aims to score Straight A's with the food. BY R PALLAVI

Concept cafes might soon outnumber traffic signals in the capital but only a handful will make you stop and think; one needs to pull an ingenious one to stick on in public memory. That's how one would place Cafe Ludus in the larger scheme of things. Tucked away on the top floor in one of Saket's noisy mall complexes, the space is modelled on high-school aesthetics. There's a library corner strewn with board games, dictionaries and a globe, unmistakably wooden classroom chairs and an outdoor amphitheatre. Couldn't guess the theme? The scrabble alphabets on the cushions and the menu doodled on exam boards are also vital clues.

At Ludus, the learning mostly takes place at the bar. Raise your hand for a smoked whisky sour which is nutty and creamy and the honeycomb margarita which, owing to a spray of Californian orange over honeyed water, surprises your taste buds with a striking sweet and sour alternation. If you're looking to simply hydrate the palate before the meal, try the toasted marshmallow martini shaken with cranberry or a deconstructed pina colada that infuses Cuban rum into a pineapple sorbet. Nothing here hits you too hard but the buzz sets in. The barmen have done their homework.

Begin the meal with the zuppa verde, a creamy broccoli soup that's dressed up in garlic and garnished with mint sprigs and fresh pepper. Vegetarians can try the Four Seasons platter that's deep fried but doesn't grease out the palate. In this, hummus and beetroot dip is paired with crunchy sambuseks and falafel balls. The carnivores must give serious thought to the lengthy burger menu. Bursting with melted cheese, grilled meat and roasted buns, the burgers are served with fries and a peppered tartar sauce.

The high point of the meal though is the pizza. Choose the half-an-half option and pair a Marcos Polo made of barbecue chicken chunks with the primavera dressed with asparagus and artichokes. Drizzled with olive oil and basil, these are fresh and come with a tangy red chilly chutney. For dessert, the staff will prompt, almost force, you to order the bipolar cheesecake. A piece of advice: avoid. It's too thick to chew beyond the first bite. Instead, the hazelnut flan is nutty, and sweet and leaves you with a refreshing caffeine high.

If nothing sent you back to school at Ludus, the playful art in the washrooms certainly will. Swing by sophomores.

MORE RECOMMENDS

- Marcos Polo and Primavera Pizza
- Hazelnut Flan

Meal for two (without alcohol) ₹1,800 plus taxes

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IN GOOD TASTE

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Cocktails Calpurnia **Restaurant** Le Petite Maison, London

MY FAVOURITE THINGS

My Machine Macbook Air in a Yves Saint Laurent bag **Timepiece** Hublot and Patek Philip **Entertainment System** Harmon Kardom speakers plugged onto a Philips LED

MIND SPACE

I Read Malcolm Gladwell's Outliers, Viktor Frankl's Man's Search for Meaning and Miyamoto Musashi's The Book of Five Rings

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Drives Audi A8, Porsche Cayenne **Art** Raja Ravi Verma, Salvadore Dali **Pets** Love German Shepherds, wife doesn't

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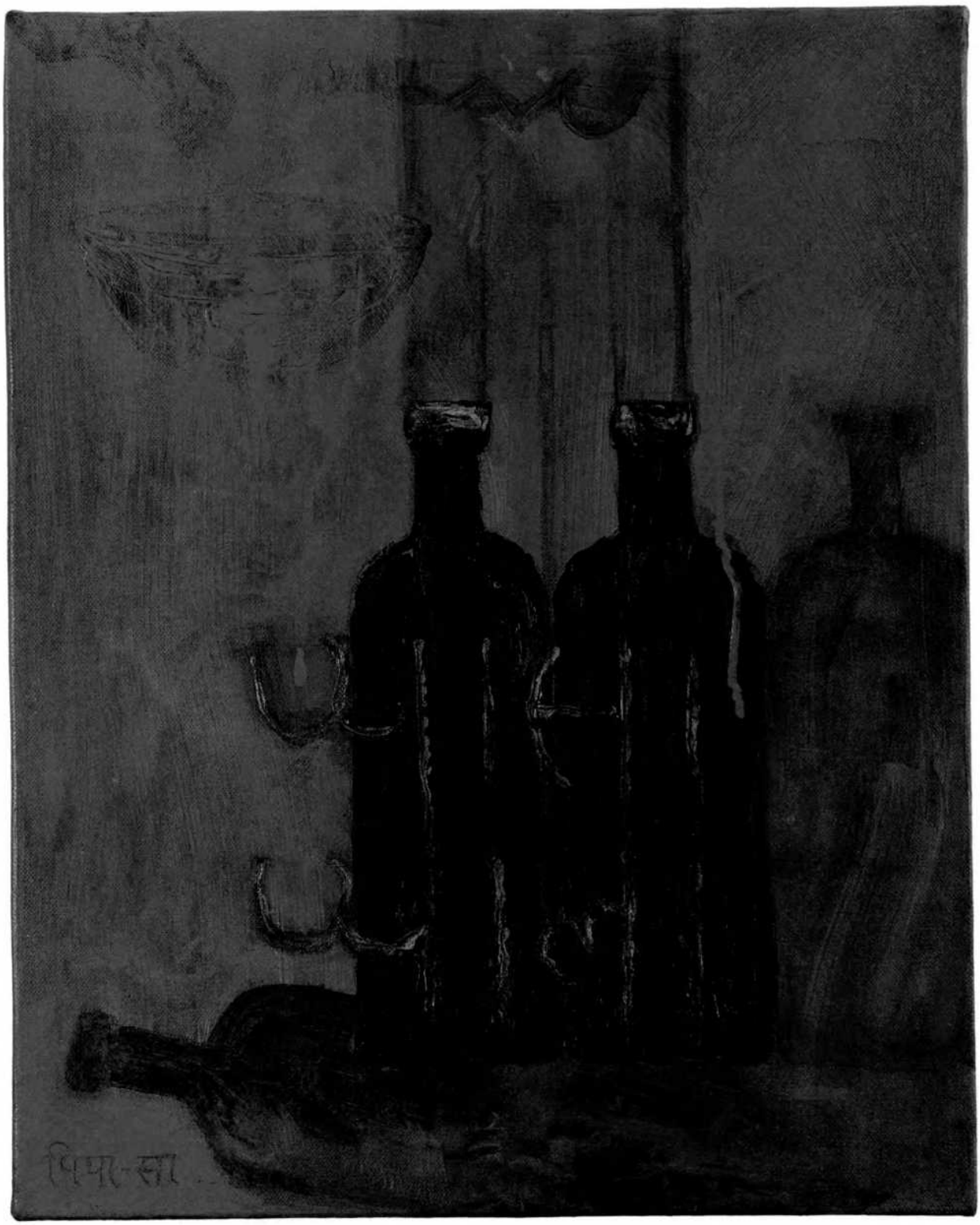

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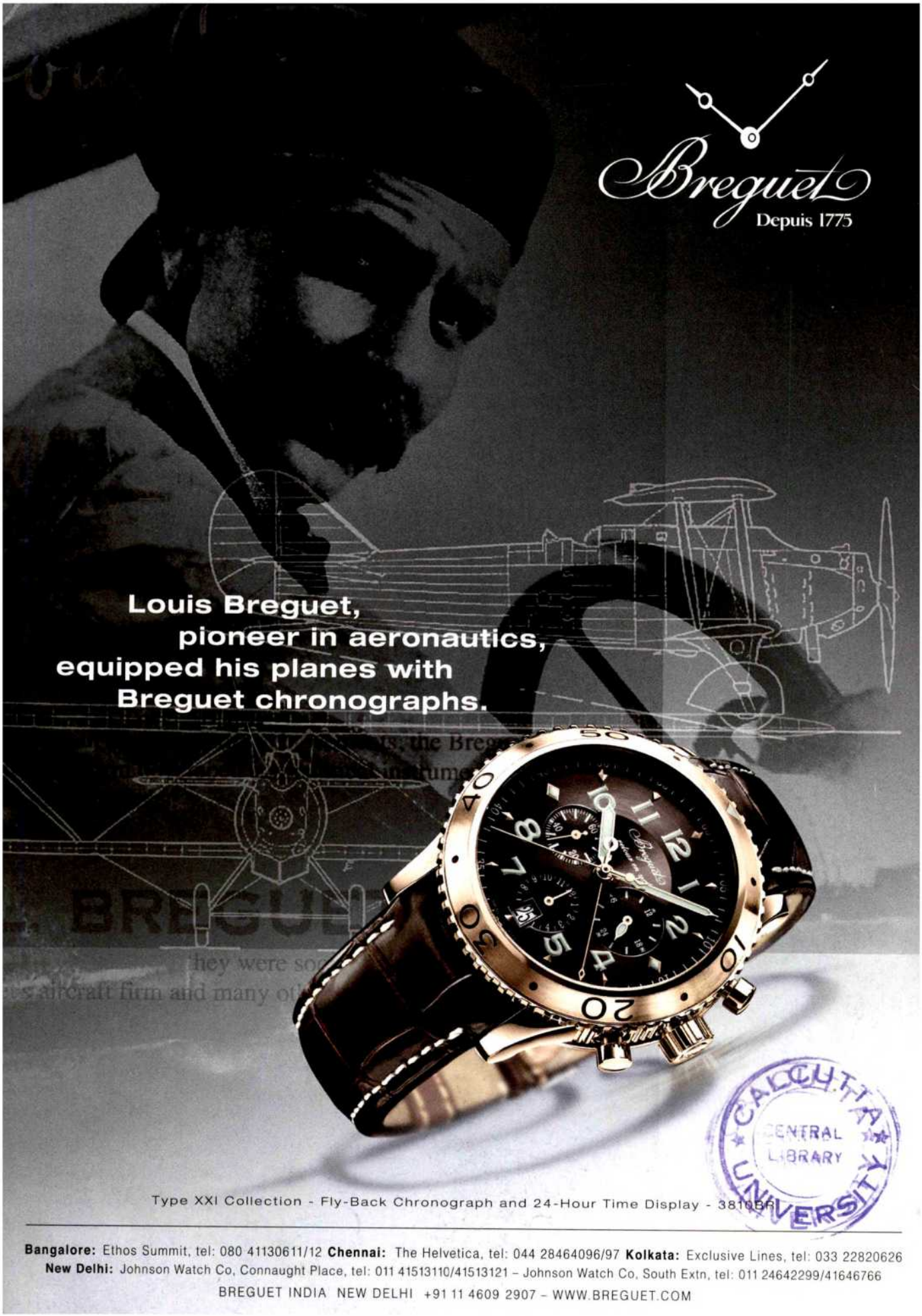

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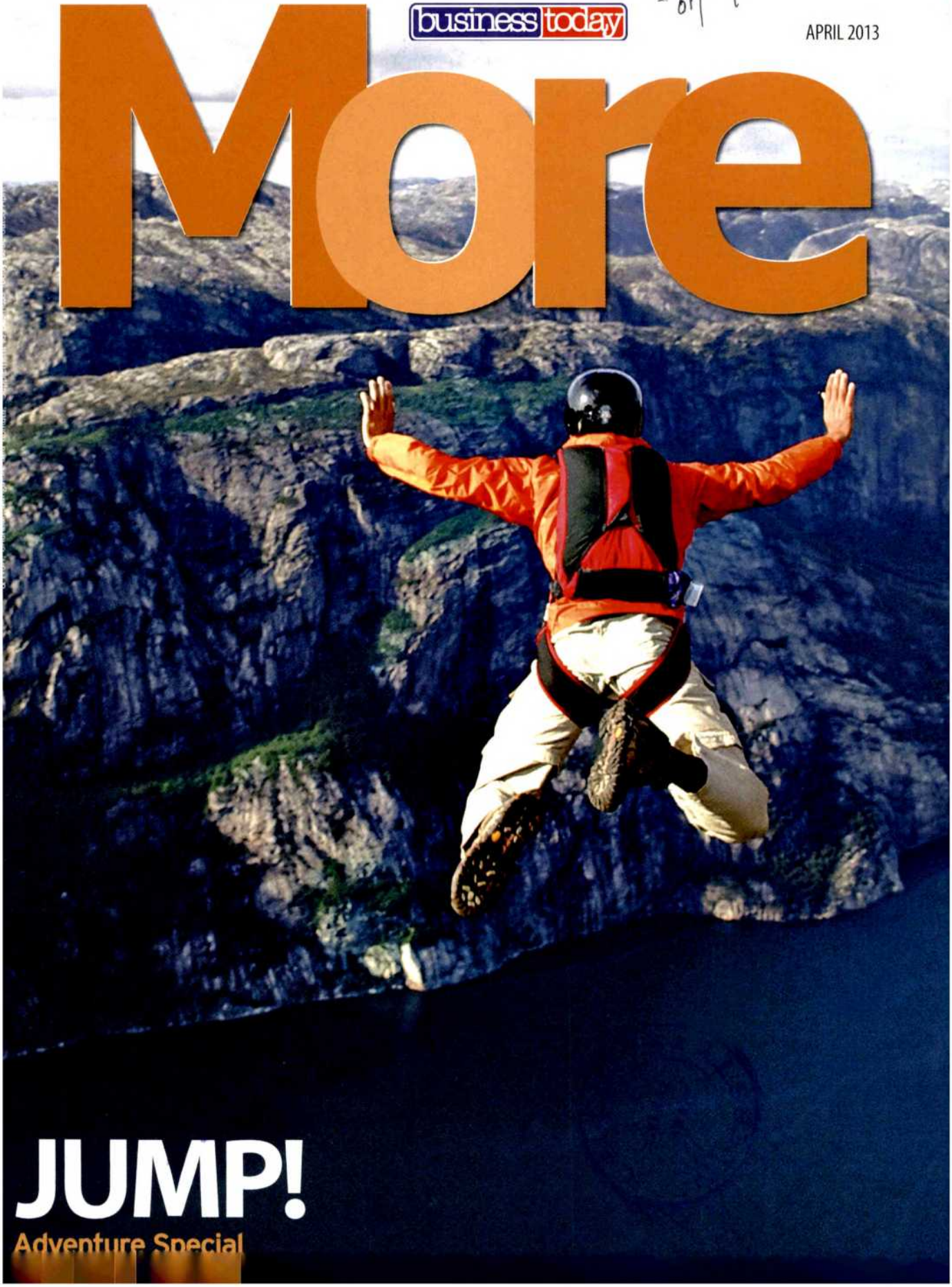

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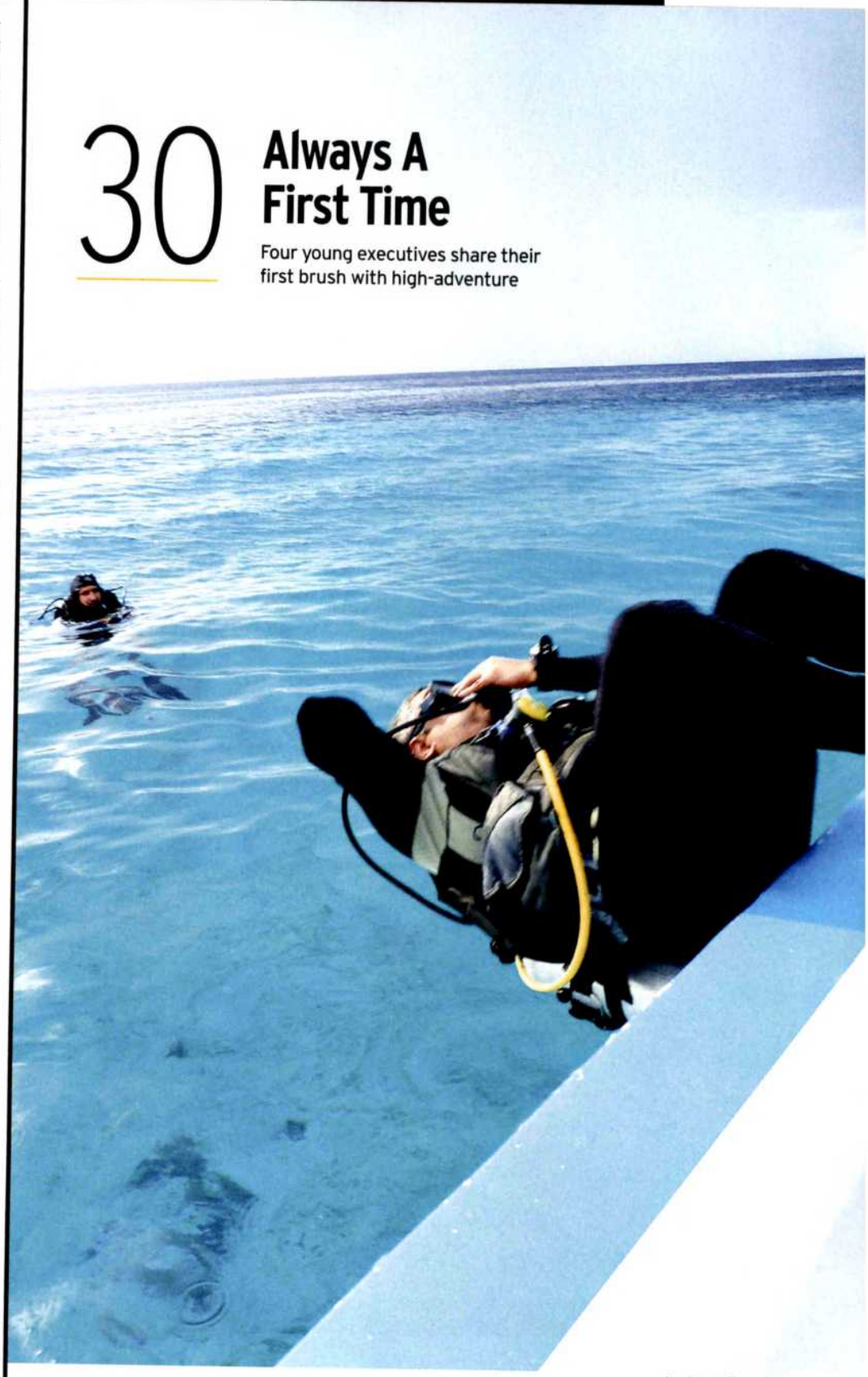

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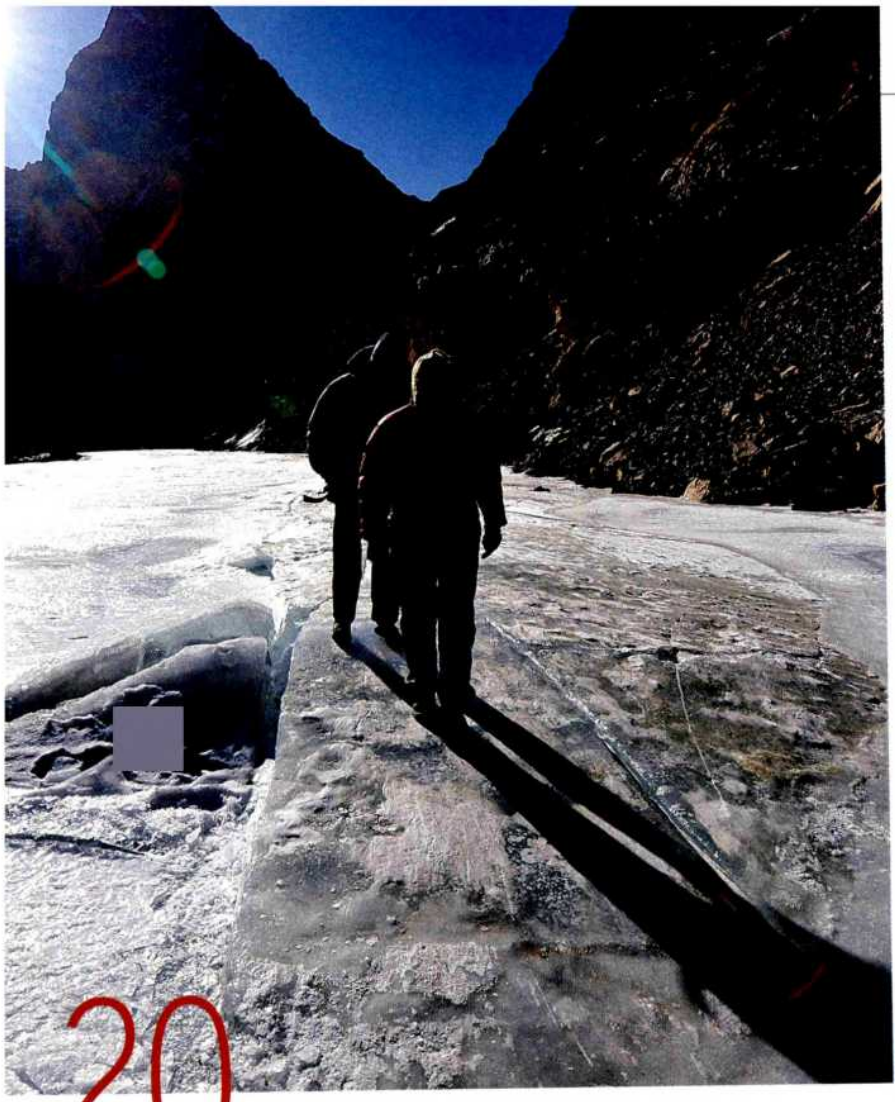

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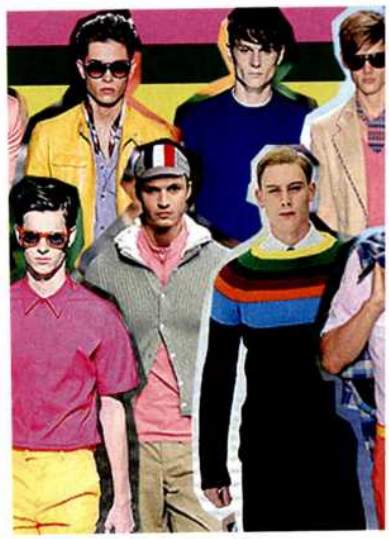

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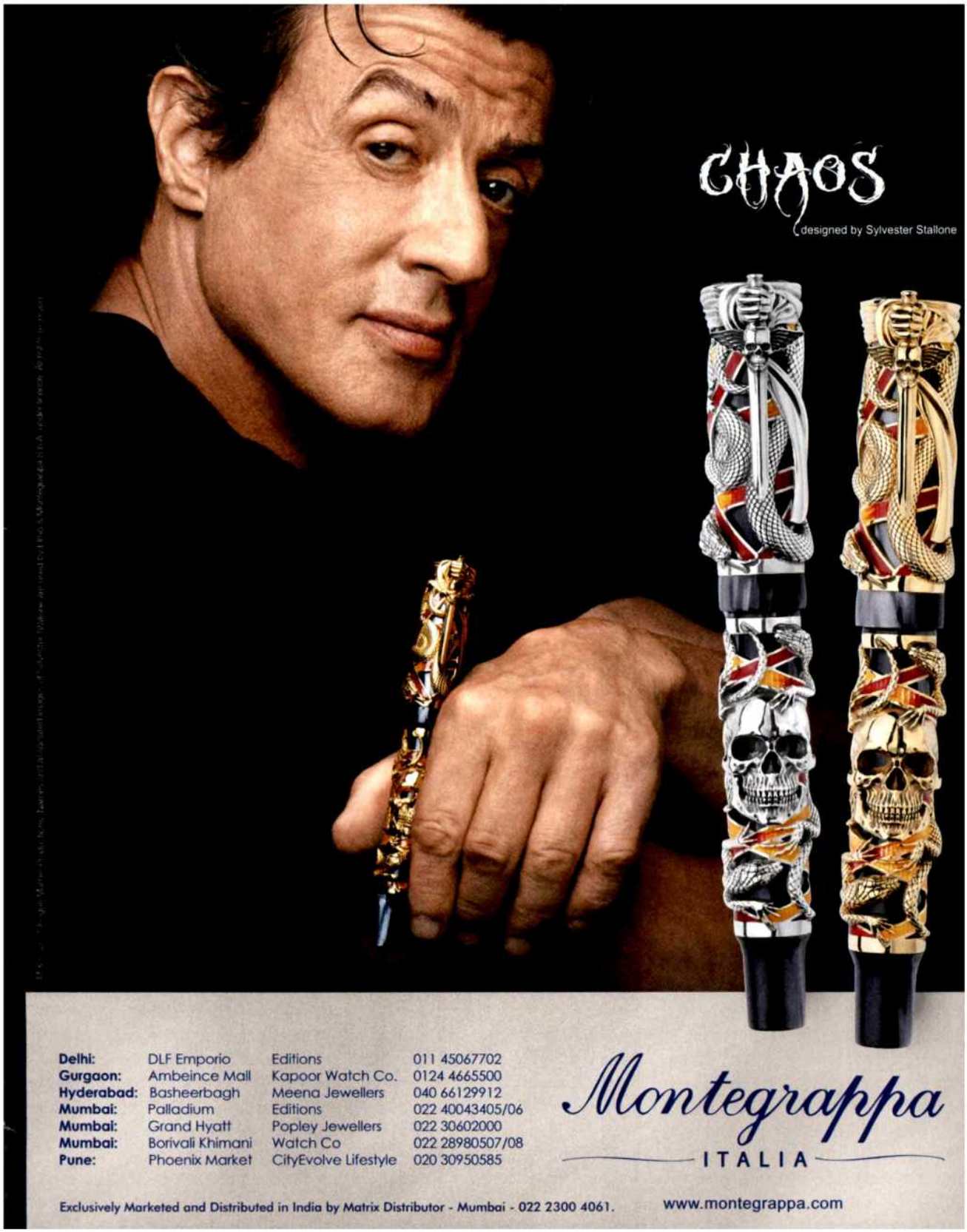

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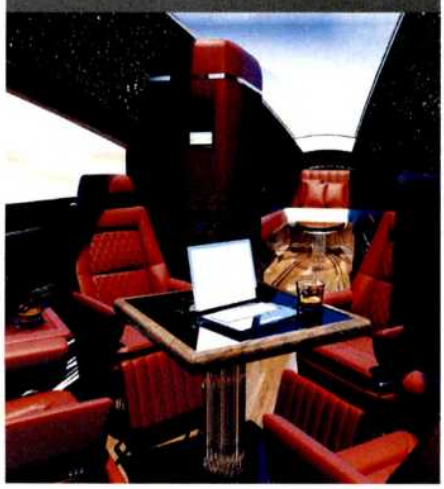
JAZZ UP YOUR SUPER CAR

Auto majors tell you what to keep in mind while customising your supercar.

Driven by Design Limited editions are always a safe idea and with so many options, you'll find something that suits your style. The Bentley Mulsanne Diamond Jubilee paid a tribute to Queen Elizabeth II with gold headrest embroidery and veneered picnic tables that depicted a royal carriage; the Audi diamond edition was embellished with a diamond-studded gear stick, a silver and platinum logo on the steering wheel, chassis and keys. Special editions designed by couture labels like the Armani Mercedes Benz CLK and the Fiat 500 by Gucci, also have strong recall value.

Tech Talk Identify the unique tech feature that your supercar boasts and include it in your customisation. For instance, upgraded Mercedes models come with a COMAND or Cockpit Management and Data System which acts as a command centre for all audio and telecommunication functions. The Audi has a rear seat executive package that offers remote control operated business class level of comfort and customisation. Cadillac also has the CUE7 driver interface for magnetic control and immediate exhilaration.



Raise The Bar

Here's how you can stock your bar with some of the rarest spirits in the world.

SCOTCH: HIGHLAND PARK RESERVE 1902

In the period between 1900 to 1940, the Berry Bros were the most sought after wine merchants, supplying wine to the Royal Family and all the crowned heads of Europe. Owing to their clientele, they had the absolute pick of the barrels and casks. **Price** £2,895

RYE WHISKY: HANNISVILLE CACHE

Comprises two carboys of magnificent pre-prohibition rye, two carboys of pre-prohibition whiskey and one carboy of superb pre-prohibition gin. Believed to have originated in the casks purchased by John Welsh of Philadelphia, US ambassador to Great Britain in the late 1870s. An intense whiskey with hints of vanilla, high notes of ginger, burnt toast and licorice. **Price** £135 for a 200ml sample

GIN: HANNISVILLE CACHE

The pre-prohibition Old Tom style gin was distilled around 1913. It is believed to have been purchased by John Welsh of Philadelphia, US ambassador to Great Britain in the late 1870's. The ageing has lent it mature notes, but the freshness of a modern gin. There's no pungent attack in the mouth, it glides elegantly across the tongue. **Price** £135 for a 200ml sample

COGNAC: PIERRE CHABANNEAU & CO

Chabanneau's 19th century cognacs were renowned for their fine quality and have been aged in both barrel and glass. The vintage 1850 cognac give a taste of an ungrafted folle blanche on the palate, and has a velvety finish and complex spiced aromas. **Price** £2,800

WINE: CHÂTEAU LATOUR

Château Latour lies in the Médoc region to the north-west of Bordeaux, along its border with Saint-Julien, and only a few hundred metres from the banks of the Gironde estuary. In 1378, at the height of the '100 years war' the Anglo-Gascon army established its garrison here. This unique 1865 vintage bottle comes directly from the château's own private reserve. It's a fairly deep wine, with a mature rim and eucalyptus aromas. **Price on request**

Courtesy: Finest and Rarest, UK

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THINK TANK

Transit through Copenhagen

In a bid to accommodate the rise in foreign passenger traffic, Copenhagen's airport in Kastrup recently completed a refurbishment that cost hundreds of millions of kroner. The unveiling revealed a beautifully renovated airport that makes you want to linger instead of heading straight to your gate. Reinventing itself to woo the airport shopper, the airport authority has signed a five-year-long contract with the German duty-free operator Gebr. Heinemann this March, and is all set to line up consumer-focused events, including food and wine tastings of an elaborate nature. So the next time you make a stop at Copenhagen airport, don't go looking for the junk food staple. Instead, ask for a platter of poached cod and roast pork with crackling skin and pair it with a shot of neat aquavit.

And if that's not reason enough to transit through it, a recent survey revealed that Copenhagen airport, which saw 22.7 million passengers in 2011, received the highest score of 7.08 out of 10, making it Europe's friendliest airport. Paris' Charles de Gaulle, the second busiest airport in Europe, was the rudest in the region.

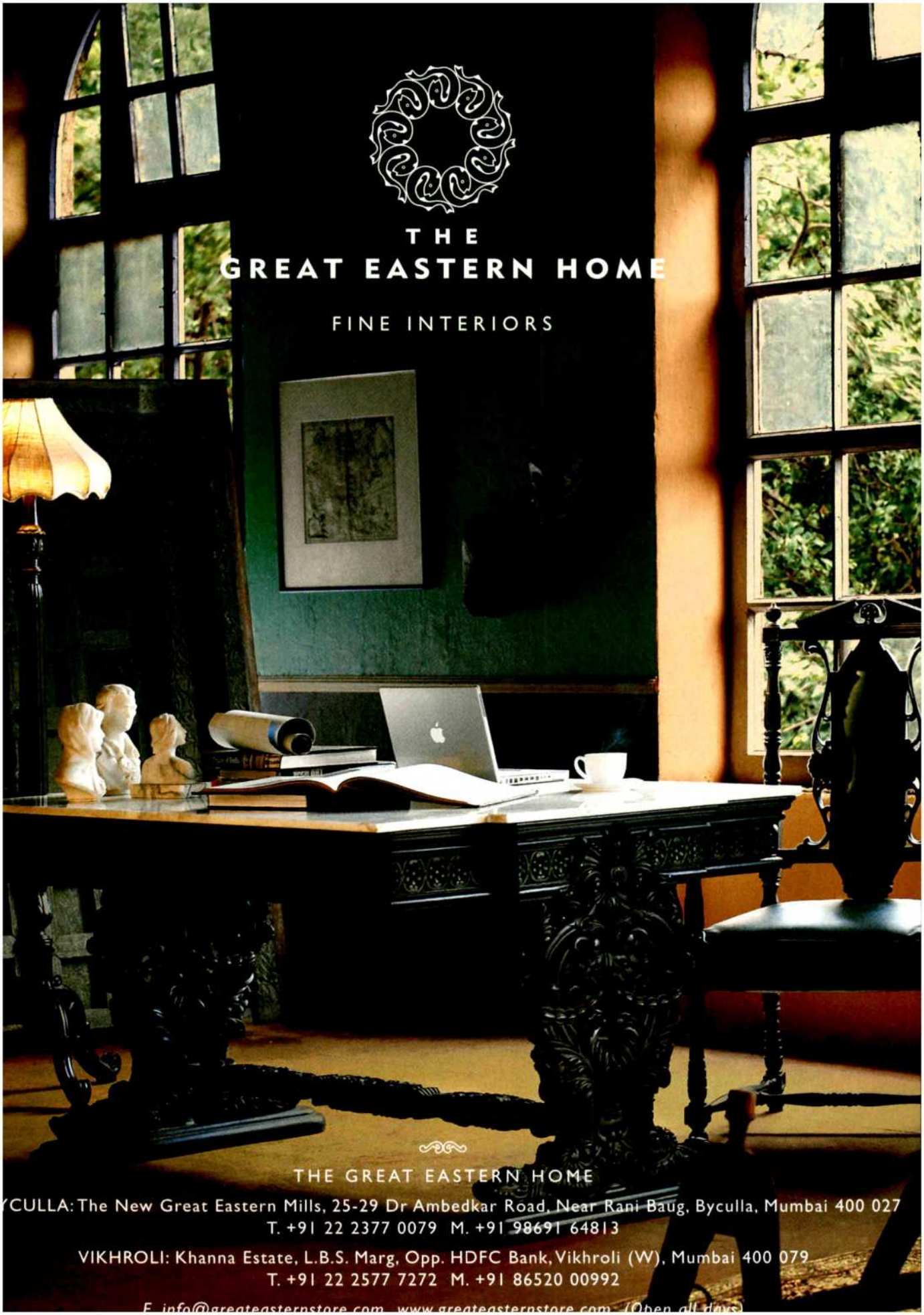
BOLLYWOOD SHINING

Madame Tussauds New York is celebrating and honouring Hindi film and culture with the unveiling of a new Bollywood exhibit featuring wax figurines of five of Indian cinemas biggest stars including Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, Hrithik Roshan, Aishwarya Rai and Kareena Kapoor. The touring Bollywood exhibition is a first within Madame Tussauds, designed to allow fans across the globe the chance to enjoy the fantastic wax figures, and will travel from Blackpool through London, Hong Kong, Bangkok and sites in Europe and the US.

BEST AIRLINE MEALS

When you're in-air for hours at a stretch, the menu at hand can do a lot to ease the pain. British-based travel site Skyscanner recently carried out a survey to identify airlines serving the best food. Dutch airline KLM emerged the unanimous winner for its long-haul, in-flight dining programme. Offering four business-class menus that alternate weekly, each dish has been developed by Michelin-star Dutch chef Richard Ekkebus, who heads Amber restaurant at the Mandarin Oriental in Hong Kong.

Till end September this year, business class passengers on KLM flights will be served classic French dishes with an Asian twist—think braised venison, or cod with curry in a coconut-lime sauce. In addition, all glassware and cutlery used by the airline has been specially created by Dutch designer Marcel Wanders. Following in the top slots, are Aeroflot, SAS, Air France and British Airways offers its first class passengers a daily seafood special supplied by the renowned Loch Fyne company in Scotland and is available on flights departing from the UK only.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PACK IT RIGHT

When you're always on the move for work, packing at a moment's notice is a strategic art that needs to be mastered. And in the era of smartphones where there's an app for every need, here are some that make both packing, and travelling a stress-free ordeal. Louis Vuitton's Art of Packing android app is a free microsite that offers the best advice on the finer points of fitting things in and guides you through packing a large suitcase or even your carry-on strolley. Additionally, Your Fashion Assistant replicates your wardrobe, and Dress Pal guises itself as a virtual closet. While on apps, Trackdot Global Luggage Tracker helps you monitor your bag during air travel, so there's no sweat about it going missing. Get app-happy to de-stress while you travel.

MARRIOTT IN BENGALURU

Yes, yet another hotel has opened in Whitefield. The Bangalore suburb which has become a haven of sorts for a number of multinational information technology companies, is the perfect address for this new business hotel which lies smack in the centre of all the activity. In a city hungry for hotel rooms to satiate the influx of business travellers, a launch from the trusted Marriott chain is a welcome addition. The Bangalore Marriott Hotel Whitefield will add 324 rooms, including 17 suites to the existing hospitality offerings in the city. There's an executive lounge on the 14th floor for meetings, and a plush presidential suite. For those who like to keep fit alongside work, there's a fitness club and a biking track by the pool. The Italian restaurant on the premises, Alto Vino, dishes up superb and authentic Italian fare, while the Whitefield Baking Company has a broad range of desserts and bakes on display that help stave off midday hunger pangs. End a busy day of work by unwinding over a selection of cocktails and world-class liquor at M Bar, which sports a sky atrium that allows you to view stars. Book yourself a room on your next trip to the IT hub and ditch the traffic.

CINEMA ON THE GO

Forget comparing screen size when deciding which business cabin to travel by. Instead, just whip out the Epson Moverio BT-100 and make your movie-watching experience as large as you like. Sleek, portable and extremely comfortable, this portable mobile viewer supports videos, photos, music and WiFi connectivity. Using LCD technology and visual imaging, the device projects a virtual 320-inch perceived screen 20m away from the user, and offers a crystal-clear display and built-in earphones delivering Dolby sound quality. Additionally, a see-through display means that you can enjoy your movie while still being aware of the surroundings. It doesn't get better than this.

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HEALTH SNIPPETS

Desk Snacks

Many executives have a secret snack stash in their desk drawers. Here are some guilt-free, healthy options.

Many executives feel the urge to nibble between meals, and that sometimes leads to quick, unhealthy binge eating. If you fall into this category, here are a few alternatives that can be purchased locally and work well.

Dry Fruits These are easy to store, and easy to eat. They also come loaded with many of the same nutrients as regular fruits. However, watch your portion size. Dry fruits have nearly the same calorie count as their fresher alternatives but in a smaller package.

Nuts and seed mixes While these are calorie-dense, they are packed with nutrients that are considered brain food. Great for boosting mid-day concentration. They're also easy to eat.

Granola bars and chikki These are both easy to make or buy depending on how much time you have. The come loaded with carbohydrates, minerals, vitamins and other nutrients. They're ideal for a mid-day sugar boost or to re-energise during or after a workout.

Multi-grain/ digestive crackers Another great desk snack since they're easy to store and eat. Multi-grain and digestive biscuits are high on fibre leaving you feeling full. They are a far better alternative to cream cookies or jam tarts that are loaded with sugar. For a bit of flavour, smear a 1/4 tablespoon of peanut butter, but no more.

FREQUENT FLIER STOMACH BUG

One of the risks of travelling to a foreign country is the food. Your stomach may simply not be used to the level of spice, or it's just as easily possible that you may have ingested something which you have not had the chance to build any natural immunity to. The result, quite often, is an upset stomach. Fortunately, there are many easy ways to treat and recover from one while on the go. One caveat: always visit a doctor if symptoms persist.

Drink up It is water we are referring to here. This is essential as diarrhoea dehydrates the body and constant fluid replacement is required. Water, fresh soups and electrolytes are your best bet for staying hydrated.

Rest This is hard if you're constantly attending meetings, but try to get as much downtime as you can between events. Avoid serious exertion and reschedule as much as possible. Skip the gym and definitely stay away from that evening cocktail party. Alcohol will not only aggravate an irritable stomach, it will also dehydrate you further.

Avoid Stress Your digestive system is surprisingly sensitive to your state of mind. Stress can aggravate an upset stomach. This is also partly why rest is advised to patients. It's important to disconnect sometimes.

Eat right Bananas, ginger, oats, chicken broth and green tea are easy on the digestive system. They possess a range of nutrients that will nurse you back to health in no time and put you back on track.

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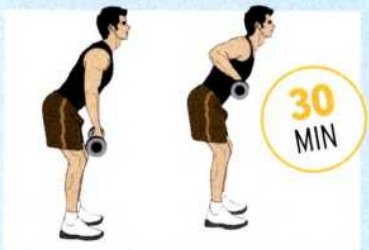
60 MIN WORKOUT

1) INTERVAL TRAINING

Sprint, row (below) or use the air-dyne machine hard for 20-30 seconds, then recover for 20-90 seconds. Repeat four to eight times.

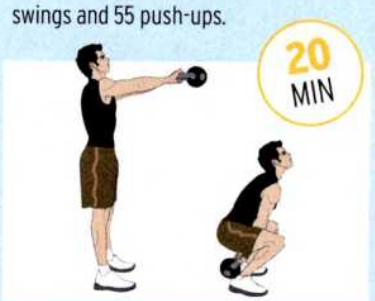
2) BARBELL SUPER CIRCUIT

Using a weight you can benchpress 15 times, do 10 deadlifts, overhead push-presses, squats and bent-over rows (below) . Rest 90 seconds, then repeat thrice.



3) KETTLEBELL LADDER

Do 20 swings (below), 10 push-ups, 20 swings and nine push-ups. Continue reducing push-ups by one until you hit zero. You should have a total of 200 swings and 55 push-ups.



THE SKIN YOU'RE IN

Feeling the heat and want to look your best for the next big meeting? Your guide to the best summer products based on your skin type.

Oily

Kiehl's Facial Fuel No Shine Hydrator Choose a light, oil-free moisturiser. Oily skin is sensitive to testosterone, which causes your oil glands to produce even more oil. Kiehl's Facial Fuel No-Shine Hydrator is designed to keep your skin matte–so you won't glisten like a disco ball when it's dark. **₹1,590 for 50 ml**

Dry

Vichy Homme Purifying Cleansing Gel If your skin feels dry and tight, try this soap-free purifying gel. Its deep cleansing facial retains the skin's natural oils and washes out excess sebum. Acne-prone skin is treated with salicylic acid and witch hazel, which cleanses, soothes, exfoliates and replenishes the skin. **₹850, 125ml**

Sensitive

L'Oreal Men Expert Hydra Sensitive Lanolin and fragrance can irritate your skin, so avoid them. Instead, use a pH-balanced, soap-free cleanser, followed by a fragrance-free, hypoallergenic moisturiser. L'Oreal's hydra-sensitive range is alcohol, fragrance and colour-free. **₹800, 150ml**

From Men'sHealth

DR SMARTPHONE

The hugely-popular WebMD portal now has an app to match. On it, you can access some of the features that made the site so popular. These include the symptom checker, drugs & treatment information and first aid advice. While the first two require a data connection, the first aid advice is available even if you cannot get online from your device. What's more, you can personalise the app by saving information about medicines or allergies that are unique to you.

SRIXON SPORTS ASIA ANNOUNCES THE ARRIVAL OF XXIO CLUBS IN INDIA

New Delhi (NCR), March 22, 2013: With a long standing tradition of premium golf clubs in Japan, Srixon Sports Asia announced the introduction of the XXIO brand in India. XXIO is part of the Dunlop Sports Co. Ltd. Family and is the No.1 Golf Brand in Japan. The brand has had tremendous success with discerning golf players in Japan, Korea and South Asia and looks to replicate this in India.

By bringing to India its high-end premium line of golf equipment, XXIO, Srixon Sports Asia underlines its vision of growth for the Indian golf market which has seen tremendous maturity over the last few years. With the benefit of advanced technology from Japan, XXIO will be the equipment of choice for all golfers.

Karma in India, is the official distributor for Cleveland Golf, and has been appointed as the distributor of Srixon Golf balls and equipment in India since 2012. Building on the tremendous success and strong relationship with Srixon Sports Asia, XXIO will now join the product line offered by Karma to suit the varied requirements of golfers.

The XXIO brand will make its India debut in New Delhi in March, followed by Bengaluru and Chennai in April and May respectively.
http://www.srixon.com/about_us.html

Korean Air to Introduce Direct Flights to Sri Lanka and the Maldives

Korean Air, with a fleet of 152 aircraft, is one of the world's top 20 airlines, and operates more than 400 flights per day to 124 cities in 43 countries. It is a founding member of the SkyTeam alliance, which together with its 19 members, offers its 552 million annual passengers a worldwide system of more than 15,000 daily flights covering 993 destinations in 187 countries.

Korean Air's new three times weekly direct service will fly from Male in the Maldives to Colombo in Sri Lanka first, and then onto Seoul/Incheon in Korea. The Male-Colombo-Seoul/Incheon flights will operate every Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday.

Flight KE 474 will depart from Male at 15:30 and arrive in Colombo at 17:30; the flight will then depart from Colombo at 18:50 and arrive in Seoul/Incheon at 06:10 the next day. On the return flight, KE473 will depart Seoul/Incheon at 22:40 and arrive in Colombo at 04:10 the next day. The flight will then continue its journey departing from Colombo at 05:40, arriving in Male at 06:40 the same day.

Off the Grid

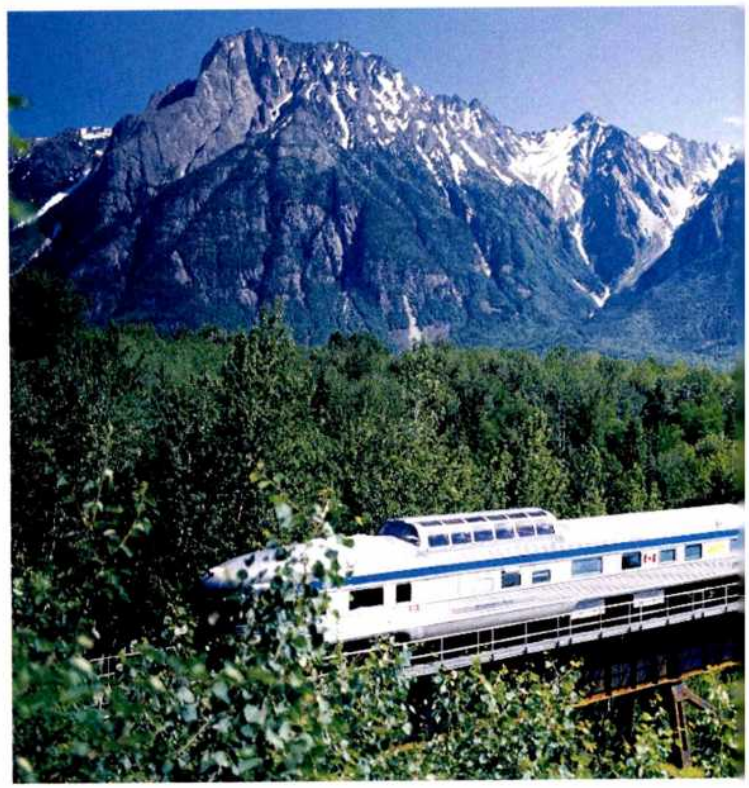
Drown the busy bucketlist and head to places that let you kick back.
BY R PALLAVI

Withdrawn from the clamour and chaos of urban life, the virgin prefecture of faraway lands stokes your wanderlust. A crisp crackle of dry leaves here and a soft glow of fireflies there, many a Wordsworthian moment are waiting to be stumbled upon in a world less profane. Travel, they say, is always about discovery and better travel about discovery of the self.

At the turn of the millenia, the average stressed out American hit the brakes. The typical packed touristy itinerary was ditched for solitude on a vineyard trail or an isolated mountain cabana. Vikram Madhok, MD, Abercrombie and Fitch, points out that the trend is attracting Indian executives, particularly bankers, who are more than happy to opt for customised de-stress tours. Slow travel characterised by places that allow you to be, without the baggage of frenzied sightseeing. Vikram Malhi, Country Head, Expedia India, says there has been an 18 to 20 per cent rise in the number of experiential and slow travellers in 2012. To this, Deep Kalra, Founder, MakeMyTrip adds that "A new age of travellers now invest in travel as a therapeutic experience". So, stop gazing at your laptop screen in the hope of a mystic diversion from monotony. New frontiers of slow and definitive travel lie open before you and there is no time like now.

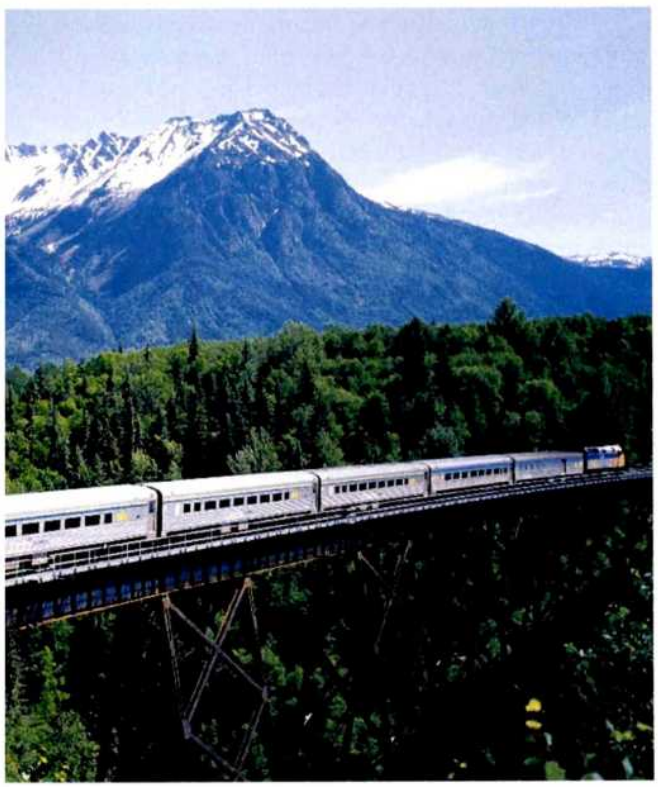
Newfoundland, Canada

When Henry Thoreau was building his theories on solitary contemplation and inspiring generations of writers in his wake, Newfoundland served as his inspiration. The uninvaded Canadian borders have fed the American thirst for wild for years. The languor of levering across groggy mountains and over sparse greenlands in a slow train is now attracting stressed city slickers looking to unwind. In Newfoundland, one can spend hours watching two things: whales, and icebergs. Spot various species of whales like the minke, sperm, pilot, blue, orca, and the world's largest population of humpbacks, all from the side of your kayak. Just as you paddle past caves and waterfalls, you'll reach the Newfoundland-Labrador coastline abundant with glacial giants, with hues ranging from snow white to deepest aquamarine. **Time to Visit** June to September; **Getting There** Air Canada (Montreal and Toronto).



Bumthang, Bhutan

The constant cloudy haze is sharpened by hills in the background, the valley resounds in periodic euphoria with the turn of artistically chiselled bells, and giggle-gaggle of boy monks; it isn't difficult to imagine Bhutan. The experience though tells a different story, and it's better. The Bhutanese landscape let's you get lost in search of yourself, a trait distinctive to Buddhists. A three-day solo trek of Bumthang, Bhutan's most sacred valley let's you unravel hidden historic anecdotes, by deciphering inscriptions on monastery walls and making long-drawn conversations with red-robed abbots as you go. You could spend hours by yourself, just filming the colourful flags that flutter alongside the mountain passes. Dochula, between Thimpu to Punakha, is a cluster of stupas with an elevation of 3,100m in the centre of the valley, and offers a 360 degree panorama of the Himalayas. It's all so still, and still so dramatic! **Time to visit** May to October; **Getting There** Druk Air (Kolkata to Paro).



Silent Frontiers

La Rinconada, Peru

The world's highest human habitation is located in the Peruvian Andes near a gold mine.The peak la Bella Durmiente, or sleeping beauty, is one of the quietest places in the world.

Tristan da Cunha

About 2800 km off the Cape of Good Hope, Tristan's 2010m volcanic peak rises out of the ocean dramatically. The community is no more than 11 flax-thatched cottages.

Kerguelen Islands

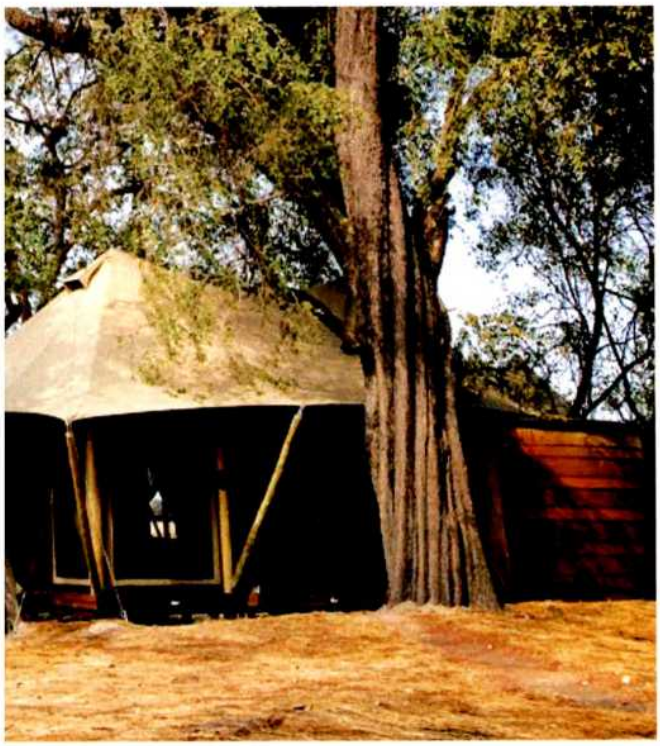
This is the largest island in an archipelago of 300 islands, islets and reefs in the southern parts of the Indian Ocean. The region has no indigeneous inhabitants.

Easter Island

2,000 miles west of Chile, Easter Island is isolated in the Pacific Ocean. It is famous for its gigantic rock sculptures called Moai.

Tarkine, Tasmania

Gracefully distanced from all continents, Tasmania's sparkling azures are bereft of coal dust and radioactive waste. In fact, the Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation propounds that the remote Cape Grim enjoys air that hasn't touched land in weeks and water that can be bottled and sold worldwide, as is. Indulge your senses by walking right into the Tarkine wilderness for nocturnal spotlighting through marshlands and rainforests. The overland track is a six day walk where hikers are on their own. Complete the experience with a quiet low-tide walk around the fossil bluff that has an ancient glacial deposit, Wynyard Tillite, next to it. **Time to Visit** December to February; **Getting There** Qantas Airways (operated by Jet airways) to Davenport.



Game Reserves, Botswana

A rapt stillness dominates the scene. An anarchic fear of animal instinct grasps the air; you are nothing more than a curious onlooker in infinite stretches of untamed, unfenced wilderness where survival is both, a virtue and a vice. With a population of just over two million and a desert patch that covers 70 per cent of its landscape, Botswana's subtropical nature reserve is largely undisturbed by mankind. Spend a week in a tent guarded by firelight in the thick of wild. During the day, do a dugout canoe safari on the floodplain lagoons of the Okavango Delta, the world's largest inland lake. The unbounded woodlands and water channels are also apt for slow kayaking. At dusk, follow the blue wildebeests and gazelles on horseback or prowl around on an elephant. For up-close views of species like the bat-eared fox, wild cats and rare antelopes of springbok and oryx, try the game drive. **Time to Visit** May to September; **Getting There** European Airlines (Mumbai to Francistown).

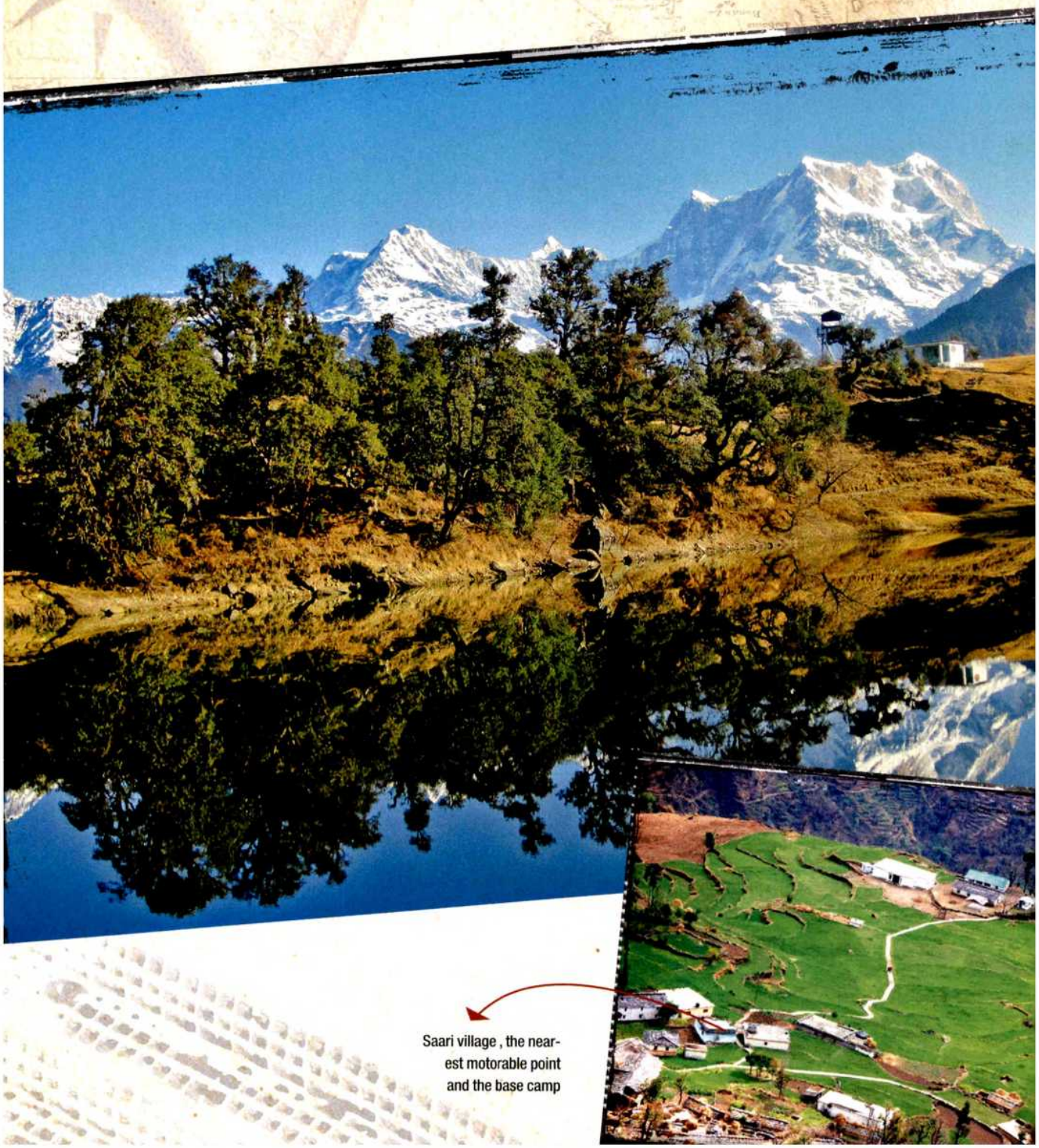
Papingo, Greece

The one distinctive trait of an old stone fortress: it reveals a little less than your curiosity craves. Constructed and connected entirely in stone, the Zagorian villages of Greece are likewise in impact. Much fodder for your travel quest eh? Peppered across the Pindus mountains in Epirus in the country's northwest, the ashen clusters have wild strawberries on arch bridges and glistening limestone towers in tune with Grecian grace. Untouched by modern construction, the muddy pathways turn into trekking tracks as you manoeuvre up the hills. Mt Timfi is abound in alpine charm and is home to the peaks Astraka(2436m) and Gamilia(2497m). Here, small snowfields and glacial lakes await you. Mt Smokilas has the widest variety of central European mountain flowers like dramatic pink violets, snowbells and butterworts. The steep cliffs and unsteady terrain make these week-long treks fantastic.
Time to Visit May and June; **Getting There** Qatar Airways (Delhi to Athens).

Left from the

Whether you are an avid hiker or a keen amateur, these four trekking expeditions—Deoriatal, Kudremukh, Dzongri, and Zanskar—offer the perfect challenge away from the boardroom.

BY ANUSHREE BASU-BHALLA



Saari village , the nearest motorable point and the base camp

dirt track

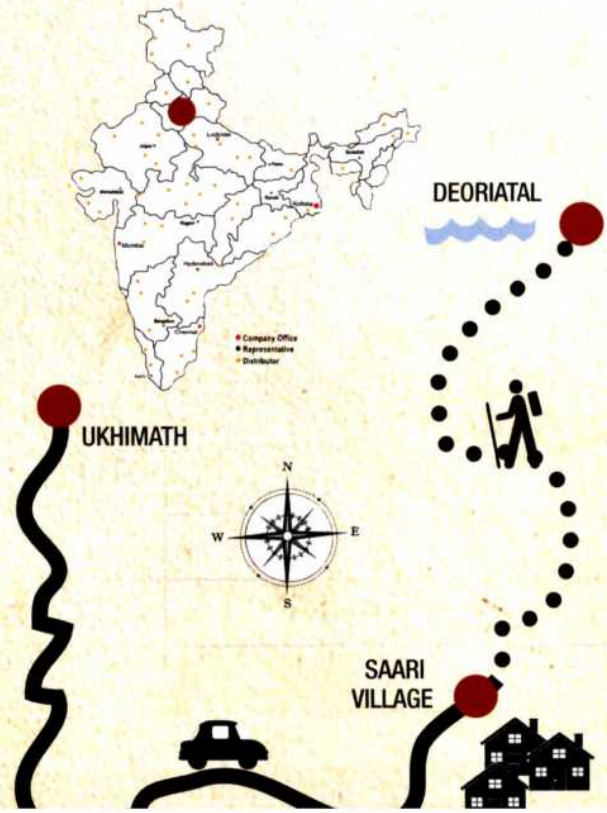
LEVEL 1

DEORIATAL UTTARAKHAND

The trek begins at Saari village, 23 km from Ukhimath in Uttarakhand. The village is also the nearest motorable point. For people looking for short hikes in the woods over a weekend, this is an ideal trek. Saari village is four kilometres off a dirt track to Deoriatal. Start your trek in the afternoon when the sun is behind you. It is a 2.5km steep uphill climb and the hike usually takes about two hours or so. You should be in time for a glorious sunset behind the mountains. Once you reach the pristine and tranquil Deoriatal, you are greeted with beautiful panoramic vistas of Chaukamba, Kedar and Neelkanth peaks of the greater Himalayas. The lake is so still that the powdery peaks actually form a mirror-image on the waters.

You can camp near the lake overnight. There are local tour guides in Saari village who can help you with tents, a cook and supplies for a fee of ₹1,300 for six people.

The prinstine Deoriatal lake



Trek Info

Level: Easy. No prior trekking experience required.

When to Go: March through May

How to Reach: Ukhimath is 416 km from New Delhi and Saari Village is a further 23 km by road from Ukhimath.

Time: Half a day

Equipment: Hiking shoes, rain gear, light carry bag with overnight (optional) supplies.

LEVEL 2

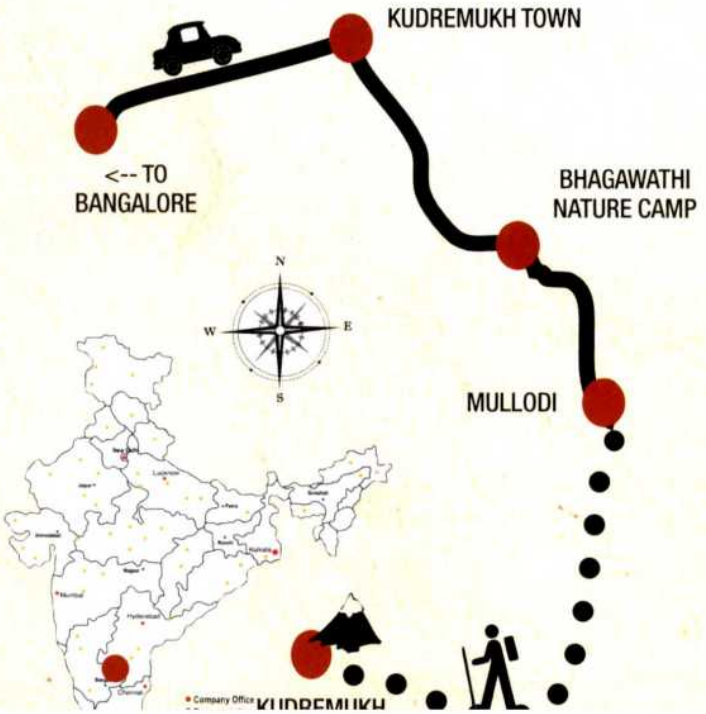
KUDREMUKH KARNATAKA

Kudremukh Peak, the highest point of Kudremukh National Park

The Kudremukh trek is about 11km from Mullodi, the nearest village and start point to the summit. The closest town connected to a highway is Kalasa. The trek is a dirt track spread partly over the thick hilly and forested area on the Western Ghats. This region is famous for its rolling hills covered with shola grasslands. These highlands are spread across three districts, Chikmagalur, Udupi and Dakshin Kannada. The summit point and the final challenge of the trek, the Kudremukh peak, lies inside the Kudremukh National Park. It is a UNESCO world heritage site and home to steep cliffs, deep ravines and waterfalls. There is also a variety of flora and fauna including the spotted deer, wild foul, lion tailed macaque and wild boar.

Get a permit (₹30 per person) from the forest department at Kudremukh main gate for trekking. Forest department guides charge ₹100. Camping is not allowed inside the National Park. This means that the trek to the peak and subsequent return must be completed in a single day. Pace yourself well to return by dusk.

Hanumanagudi waterfall enroute to the Kudremukh Peak.



Trek Info

Level: Moderately challenging

When to Go: August through November

How to Reach: Kalasa is the nearest town from Mullodi, Kudremukh. It is about is 340km from Bangalore

Time: One day

Equipment: Sturdy shoes, rain gear, light carry bag with supplies

Michael Mellinger

Trek Info

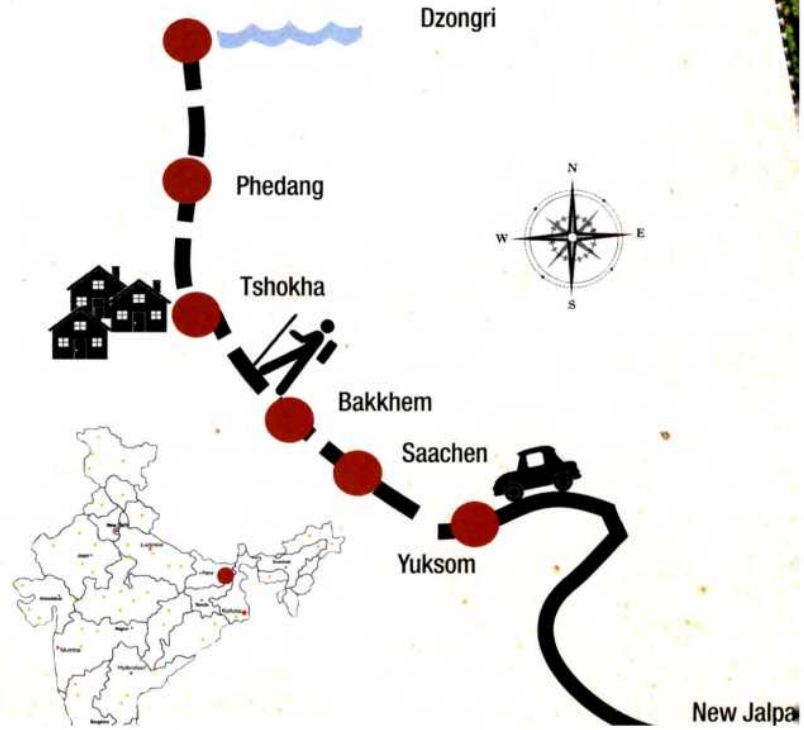
Level: Fairly challenging. Requires prior trekking experience and/ or special guidance

When to Go: March-April and September-October

How to Reach: New Jalpaiguri in West Bengal is 150 km from Yuksom

Time: Five days, including one day acclimatisation at Tshokha

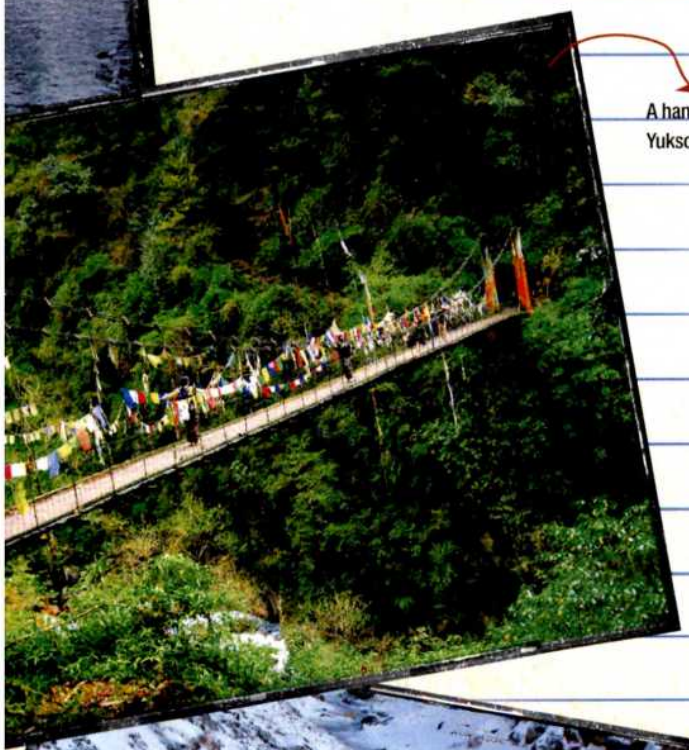
Equipment: Winter gear, ice-ready shoes, supplies and medicines, tent for camping



LEVEL 3

DZONGRI SIKKIM

Dzongri lake



A hanging bride at Yuksom

Yaks are your constant companions on your way up to Dzongri

Michael Melli

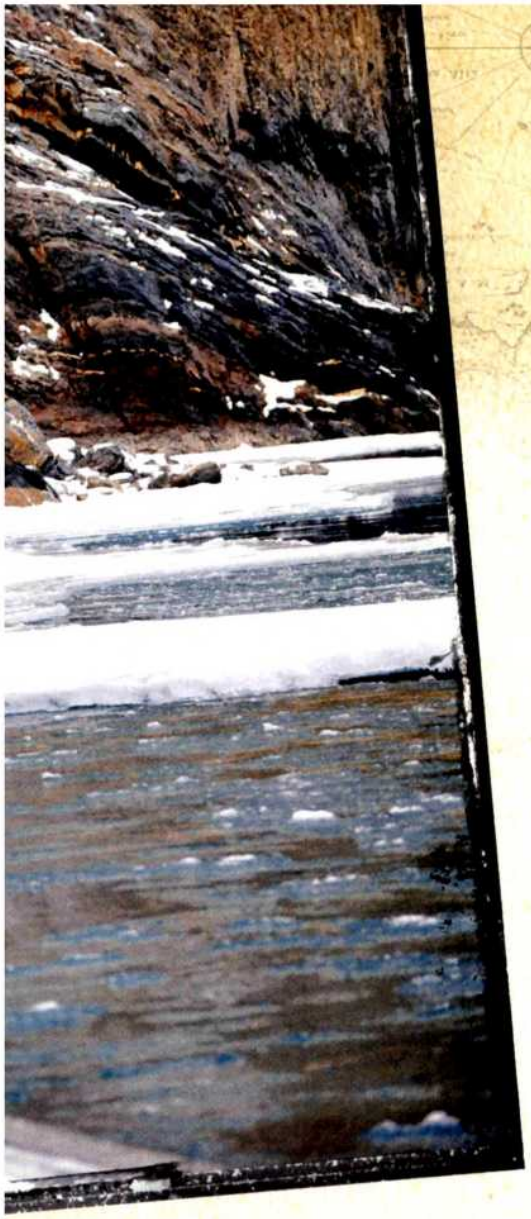
The trek starts from Kachenjunga National Park in Yuksom. The entry fee is ₹1000 for four people including the trekking crew of porter, guide and yaks. The trek to Dzongri and back typically takes five days, with one day of acclimatisation at Tshokha village. The trek on the first day covers Yuksom-Saachen-Bakkhim-Tshokha (18km). This leg of the trek passes through dense sub-tropical forests of the Kachenjunga National Park, with magnificent views of mountain peaks, picturesque waterfalls, hanging bridges and rhododendrons in full bloom. Once at Tshokha village, rest for an entire day. Amateur trekkers should acclimatise well to avoid altitude sickness. For accommodation, opt for Sikkim Tourism's hutment at the village, available for just ₹50 per day for one room.

The last leg of the trek covers Tshoka-Phedang-Dzongri (8km) and is also the most arduous bit, given the high altitude, unrelenting weather, and ice. Fatigue can make things even worse, so take ample breaks on your journey up. Pine trees and high altitudes shola grasslands dot your way through the track. You reach Dzongri by evening. Almost through the year this lake is in a semi-frozen state.

Photographs: Manish Laknani

The Chadar trek is done in groups of 10-12 people

Tilit Sumdo, the next stopover after Chilling

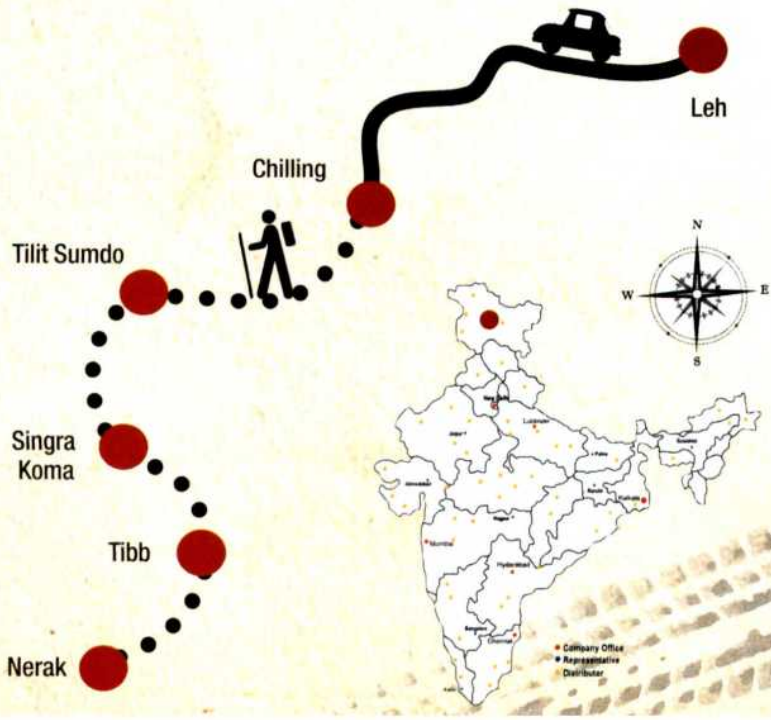


LEVEL 4

ZANSKAR
JAMMU & KASHMIR

A nine-day trek, covering 70 km and at a height of 11,123 feet, the Chadar trek (known so because it is literally walking on a sheet of thin ice on Zanskar river) is arguably the most adventurous and arduous treks in the country. The trek route begins at Chilling, 162 km from Leh. At Leh, one should acclimatise for at least two days before embarking on the journey. Chilling is the base camp and also last motorable point here. The route goes like this: Chilling-Tilit Sumdo-Singra Koma-Tibb-Nerak and back.

For most of its length between Chilling and the Zanskar valley, the river is confined within a steep canyon, and that's the trail of the trek itself. Mostly flat, the trail is extremely challenging because of its sheer scale and inhospitable conditions—the temperatures fall as low as 25 degrees Celsius. It requires prior training and ample trekking experience. There are myriad guides and trek operators to Zanskar in Leh. The prices per person range from upwards of ₹20,000, all inclusive.



Trek Info

Level: Extremely challenging

When to Go: The Chadar forms fully from the 3rd week of January. The trek can be done starting the first week of March

How to Reach: Leh is the nearest airport. It is 162 km from Chilling the base camp

Time: Nine days

Equipment: Heavy winter gear, headlamps, supplies and medications, nordic walking sticks, ice-ready shoes, camping gear

Happy Birding

After a week of being cooped up in office, get your family together for some bird action. Pack a pair of binoculars and lots of patience for a weekend at the stake out. BY HITANI KAUR

The rare Osprey can be found in and around Delhi.

There's a certain thrill that comes from spotting a rustle in the leaves, silently pursuing it and finally being rewarded as you gain a vantage view through a set of magnified eyes. 'Birding' as it is popularly referred to these days, is a practice in patience that yields incredibly rewarding returns. And contrary to common misconceptions, you don't need to travel far to enjoy it. If you have a Sunday morning that's unrushed and you want to make the most of it outdoors before being thrown back into the grind, birding affords you travel of a different sort. Delhi alone boasts a checklist of up to 500 species, the second highest in the world in a city after Nairobi. It makes for the ideal weekend morning, and you're back home in time for lunch. So whether you're sequestered in Delhi, Mumbai or even Kolkata, the chirps of the birdcall are never too far away. Set aside your next Sunday to trudge along in the wild and immerse yourself in birdsong. Don't forget your binoculars and camera.

Delhi

The Capital offers more than a few birdwatching sites and up to 500 species. Sultanpur National Park in Gurgaon, is a two hour drive from Delhi and one of the most popular and tourist spots for birders with mixed topography of wetlands, grassland and dry land. You should head out in small groups of up to six and just remember to stick to the trodden path. All you need is your binoculars, a refer-

ence book on birds and you're good to go. Ducks, egrets and herons are a given, and you just might get lucky and spot one of the rarer endangered species like the osprey. Alternatively, you can cut on your driving time by heading to the Aravalli Biodiversity Park along the ridge in North Delhi (get prior permission from park authorities) or even the Okhla Barrage Bird Sanctuary which winds along the Yamuna and has about 10,000 migratory birds during winter. Contact the Delhi Bird Watching Society at www.DelhiBird.com.

Kolkata

Situated to the east of the Hooghly and with the Sunderbans just a 100 km away, Kolkata and its surrounding areas are a treat for binocular-armed birders. The best spots for success are the Botanical Gardens and the Chintamani Kar Bird Sanctuary. Located just 10 km from Ruby Hospital crossing, Chintamani is spread over about 17 acres and is home to over 150 species of birds, most of which are passage migrants. From the emerald dove, blue-throated flycatcher, grey-headed fish eagle, slaty-legged crake, and the Tickell's thrush, to the large-billed reed warbler and the added bonus of about a 100 types of butterflies, you" find it all here. In contrast, Nalban on the fringe of Salt Lake is the place to spot a large number of ducks and if lucky, even the rare Ferruginous Pochard. While the kingfisher is a common sight here, try to catch a glimpse of the endangered marsh mongoose before it disappears altogether because of urbanisation. Prakriti Samsad is a local birding club in Tollygunge which offers assistance in the same.

The Common Kingfisher and Pintail ducks (Kolkata); a bordwatcher; Black Naped Oriole (Mumbai).

Mumbai

Every year, thousands of birds species migrate to Mumbai from around the world and settle into the city's birding locations to mate in its ideal climate. Mumbai is home to several birding sites. The Sewri jetty, located 1.5km from Sewri station, is the best place to photograph flamingos dotting the vast mud land. The Shilonda Trail at Sanjay Gandhi National Park in east Borivali is one the best natural habitats in which to observe woodland species like babblers, cuckoos and the copper-smith as well as multiple trees like teak, mango and bamboo. Even Alibaug's surrounding areas of Kankeshwar and Revanda are good spots. While Revanda is great for spotting the black-headed gull,ruddy turnstone, sanderling, greater sand plover and booted warbler, Kankeshwar is famous for it's hilltop temple and raptor species like the white-eyed buzzard, the spotted eagle and booted eagle. The best route to take is to approach Alibaug by ferry from the Gateway of India and then take a rickshaws further in. Contact the Bombay Natural History Society at www.bnhs.org/ for information of birdwatching events. ■

Sky Diving

Ankur Bhagat lives in New Jersey and works with PricewaterhouseCoopers. He's logged hundreds of skydives and BASE jumps since his first in 2001.

For once you have tasted flight you will walk the earth with your eyes turned skywards, for there you have been and there you will long to return.' Leonardo da Vinci did not have skydiving in mind but his words explain how my life has been since my first jump.

Like other kids, I too jumped off furniture pretending to be Superman, but my short leaps weren't much fun. I often wondered what it'd be like to really fly. Years later, as a colleague narrated her first skydive, my desire was rekindled. I began research that evening and not long after, I was signing up for an accelerated free fall (AFF) program at a local 'dropzone' in New Jersey.

In America, AFF training is overseen by the US Parachute Association (each country has its own PA). AFF starts with a six-hour ground school that covers the A to Z of skydiving. My favourite bit was malfunctions. That's when you realise that what goes up doesn't always come down pretty. Armed with this knowledge, I was ready to make my first jump.

My emotions ran wild to say the least. Minutes after climbing into a Cessna 206, we were airborne. The ride up was self-inflicted torture as my head replayed every potentially ugly outcome. At 13,000 feet the door opened, my instructors took a good grip on me and 3, 2, and 1...!

What it feels to leave a perfectly good airplane for the first time is difficult to describe, you have to do it to know it. To paint a picture, imagine unbounded fear and anxiety on a collision course with breathtaking amazement and intense exhilaration. For the first time I realised what 9.8m/s2 really meant in practical terms. As elated as I was, I was also truly humbled by this experience; and continue to be to this day.

Leap In!

Get Started

The Andamans offers India's best mix of clear water and rich marine life. Goa is popular but look for dive shops that add Netrani Island to the package, where the water is better. Lakshadweep has stellar dive spots but is the hardest to access of the three.

Get Started

Skydive Aamby Valley is based out of Mumbai and operates in nearby Aamby Valley. Bird's Paradise Extreme Resort and Thai Sky Adventures are both based in Thailand. Skydive Dubai Desert Campus is located just outside the Emirate. All four are US Parachute Association affiliates and follow the same standards.

Ankur Bhagat

Adventure sports can seem daunting and even dangerous to first-timers. BT More spoke with three adrenaline junkies to find out why their first time kept them going back for more. So loosen that tie, break out that backpack, and go trippin'!

Scuba Diving

Jaideep Prabhu is a PhD student at Vanderbilt University. He's logged 16 dives since 2011.

Neptune was never my favourite god, perhaps because he only blessed me with middling aquatic skills. As a child, it was the thunder of Saturn V rockets that gave me goosebumps, not the silence of the Ohio class submarines. I came to scuba on a whim; something better to do over Thanksgiving Break than a trip to Las Vegas, and boy, was I glad!

My first dive trip was to Cozumel, Mexico. My initial trepidation eased somewhat when I found out that the dive suit itself was buoyant enough to keep me afloat. Then, as I descended past 20 feet I first felt...tranquillity. Not the lonely sort you might find on a mountain top, but a rich, integrated sense of peacefulness, of oneness with the world.

The only sound was my own Darth Vader-esque breathing as the spectacularly blue water enveloped me. Fish swam right past, as if I were merely a plant or rock; a few feet below, a turtle was snacking. I was almost weightless, floating over the edge of an underwater cliff. It took me half a second to realise I wouldn't fall! I was switched off from the world, its emails, phone calls, and tweets. I might as well have been the only person on the planet; or a guest on my own.

I could go on, but it is ultimately an experience to be had in person. Much like summitting a mountain or imbibing a good wine, it cannot fully be described. Few activities propel you into a different world. Short of space flight, scuba is one such adventure. If you are a little hesitant, I can assure you it is very safe unless you do something stupid. You can start your adventure by signing up for a course with PADI or NAUI, two of the most popular scuba programs in the world.

Get Started

The Rishikesh sector along the Ganga has a good mix of calm stretches and challenging rapids, ideal for beginners. It also offers hop-off points for other adventure sports. More advanced rivers include the Zanskar and Bhramaputra.

OUTDOORS UNLIMITED

Rafting

Dhananjay Bhole worked in the corporate world. He quit to follow his passion and now organises his own adventure expeditions.

The outdoors always held a strong fascination for me. At Barnes School, Deolali, where I was a student, our teachers encouraged (some would say 'pushed') us to participate in all kinds of outdoor activities and sports. So we went headlong into swimming, cross-country, football and hockey from a very early age.

As I grew older, my life filled with familial responsibilities. These forced my love for the outdoors to take a backseat, even though I wanted otherwise.

Then, by chance, 2009 happened. That year, I went off on my first river rafting expedition to Rishikesh with friends. As we climbed into the raft, the first thing that hit us was the cold water. Not long after, the waves from the first rapid began to toss us around.

There's only one way to describe my mental state at that point: it was fear and thrill all at once. I remember wondering why we had to sit on the edge of the bouncy raft when there was so much space in the middle. Surely, it would prevent anyone from being thrown overboard.

Our first rapid lasted only a few seconds, but even in that short time, we had been chewed up and spat out before any of us realised what had happened. Over the next four days, we paddled and floated 22 kilometres down the Ganga from 'Marine Drive' beach to 'Shivpuri' beach.

When I got home, I knew that I wanted to do this again. Not long after, I was taking my own groups.

If you've been thinking about giving rafting a shot, my suggestion is to head straight to the Rishikesh sector of the Ganga. It offers everything from big, splashy rapids to calm stretches where you can get into other activities such as bodysurfing or simply dive in for a swim. While most Indian rivers are open from October to June to avoid the monsoons, most rafting happens in the late winter. It's wise to bring a bodysuit to protect yourself from the cold. Rishikesh also has plenty of places to hike and rapel, which adds more adventure to your expedition. Once you're comfortable in a raft graduate to more extreme stretches on the Zanskar or Bhramaputra.

The Style File

Get the dirt on what's back and what's been booted in the spring-summer season. From the silhouette of your suits, the fabrics to use and the rim of your hat, to the pairing of styles and matching of hues; we let you in on the hottest trends of the season.

BY HITANI KAUR

Graphic ties, dual-piping pocket squares and a wide Panama hat add detail to the outfit; break the boudaries by teaming formal and casual wear (below)

While last year was all about being bold, this year slows down to a smooth purr with a subtle, less-is-more dress policy. 2012 showcased flamboyant, over-the-top creations; checks on checks, prints contrasting florals, and colour blocking colour. In 2013 the hyperstyling of the season gone by is replaced with minimalism in terms of design, fabric and colour.

Replacing the almost psychedelic pairing of checks and graphics, block-solid colours give a much-needed break from the frenzied cacophony of prints. With the recession of winter, this

Chalky hues (left) elevate your cool quotient. Loafers stay in the game while double-breastes jacket makes a comeback (below)

year too has pastels storming back with a vengeance. The colour palette traverses the shades of the rainbow, but keeps them solid. While formal ensembles are best kept conservative with the use of a single colourful swatch in the form of a shirt, your casual wardrobe is where you can really experiment by pairing different colours in each layer. Throw in contrasting or similar shades in pastel tones to get a carelessly put together look which works for both day and night. Also great for casual, are the evergreen collared tees. But instead of the same-old Polo that's done time for the past few seasons, opt for a ribbed or textured fabric to step it up a notch.

In contrast to the sinister shade-card of the season gone by, suits too have left the darker domain and edged towards light. The easiest way to do it—both on the eye and otherwise—is by throwing in a graphic tie to reassure your look. Adding a pocket square won't hurt either. We suggest trying out one with the added nuance of dual-colour piping, after all, the devil's in the detail. A khakhi suit is a must-have addition to your wardrobe. Charcoal grey has ebbed to a light hue, and looks beautiful especially when worn as a complete three-piece. Also on the rise, is a smokey tobacco colour option. Unlike the deep, comforting chocolate that's been a favourite in suits for more than a few seasons, this paler cousin will take some getting used to. Pair your suit with a light shirt—think pale pink with grey and a pastel green with the brown—to sharpen your look.

Speak of suits and bespoke tailoring can't be very far behind. The past few seasons have seen them downsizing to slim, slimmer, slimmest, but this year the double-breasted dapper suit makes a comeback. This silhouette can be tweaked in places to suit your physique (or lack thereof,) but be sure to pack in a snug fit regardless of lapel-width, length and height.

Another fresh-off -the-block trend this year is the combination of formal with casual. In the universe of sartorial dos and don'ts, the rules seem to have been declared null and void. Hoodies over blazers, canvas d-ring belts on dress trousers, and double-breasted blazers paired with jeans; channel your inner style-guru to move beyond. No pointers required, as long as the jumble comes

Plastic Orb loafers by Vivienne Westwood; and ankle-high sneakers; Mix and match the double-breasted jacket with casual wear

Check list

- Solids trump patterns
- Choose light-coloured suits
- Go double-breasted
- Mix formal and casual wear
- Keep sneakers ankle-high
- Wide hats are in

together seamlessly.

Moving south, loafers continue to reign supreme. But now they're not being restricted to after-work-hours. As accepted in the boardroom as at the bar, you can get adventurous by experimenting with materials to distinguish the two. While leather with metallic embellishments works better for the office, plastics and velvets with patterns hint at an adventurous personality outside of work. The trademark Zara moustache gracing the centre of your shoe can say a lot about your idea of fun. We say, the quirkier, the better.

The newest entrant to the uber-stylish shoerack, is a high-end pair of sneakers. Paris-based Pierre Hardy makes a stylish case with his line of luxury footwear. Applying his creativity to lace-ups in structured architectural styles, a futuristic pair from the shoemaker will hold you in good stead. Alternatively, check out Rick Owens and Comme des Garcons; both offer an extensively stylish range. We suggest going high-ankle; it contrasts the look of its female counterpart and yells manly-grunge.

Don't skip on the accessorising. It's a good way for you to have fun and make your personal style statement. Aside from the aforementioned pocket squares and ties, here are a few more add-ons for you to inculcate. In keeping with the trend of plus-sizing, ditch the slim Fedora for a wide-brimmed Panama which can look either sophisticated or casual depending on its material and the outfit you decide to pair it with. Lastly, god made the sun and man made sunglasses, so get sun-ready and pick a shape and tint that works for you. ■

TRACK & WIELD

LOUIS VUITTON TAMBOUR

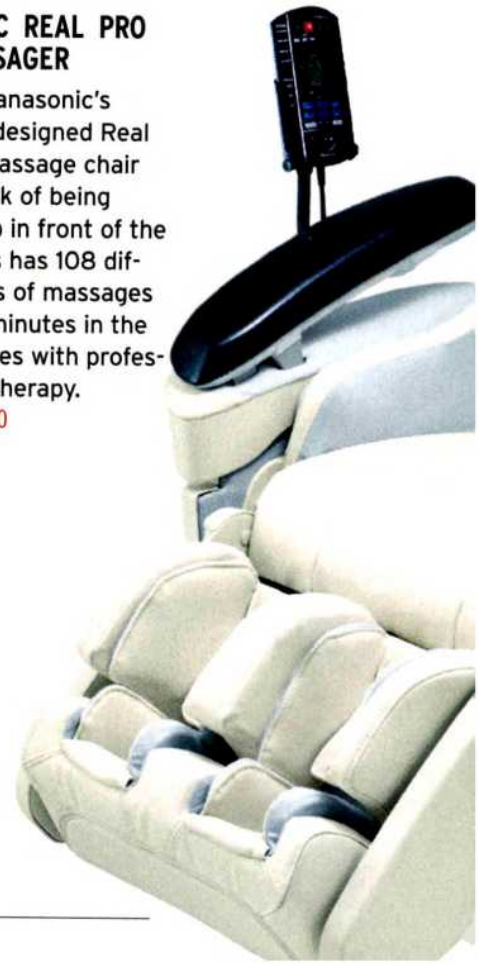
If you want style on your wrist, go to the Louis Vuitton Tambour automatic chronograph with LV277 calibre. Smart, with-it and versatile, this is a good option for both formal and off-duty wear.
Price: On request

FAN DI FENDI POUR HOMME ACQUA

Smelling good was never this easy. Make a splash this summer with this latest fragrance by Fendi that is bound to attract heat! It blends summery notes of citrus with a manly whiff of the sea and touches of basil, cardamom, red pepper and leather.
Price: ₹5,450

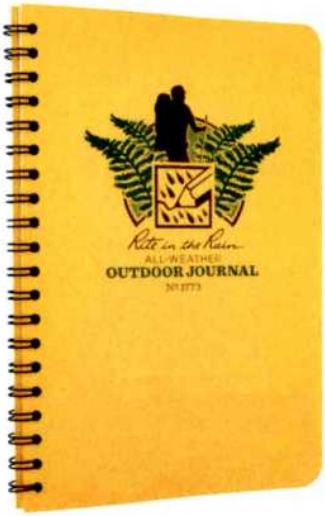
PANASONIC REAL PRO HEAT MASSAGER

Sink into Panasonic's intuitively designed Real Pro heat massage chair after a week of being hunched up in front of the laptop. This has 108 different kinds of massages and a few minutes in the chair equates with professional spa therapy.
Price: ₹4,49,950



MONTEGRAPPA CHAOS

Here's one for the fine collector. Designed by Hollywood veteran Sylvester Stallone himself, this pen draws inspiration from the cult and goth imaginations of 16th century artists like Hans Sebald Beham, Antonio Pollaiolo and Battista Franco. Price: On request



RITE IN THE RAIN

Out on a field trip or in the bush? Don't flag your position with a standard white paper notebook. Instead, protect your precious notes with these all-weather Rite in the Rain tactical journal. Price: On request

OYSTER LAGOON MULTISYSTEM BATH

Nothing beats a spray of hot water at the end of a day of endless banter and meetings. Oyster Bath's Lagoon Multisystems collection is a smart shower that comes with electronic shower settings (think, waterfall to light drizzle!) and a steam system that makes it difficult to turn off.
Price: ₹3,02,700

GOURMET CENTRAL

Nordic Findings

When in Hong Kong, hop over to FINDS, the Michelin-star Nordic restaurant, where every morsel is worth its weight in gold. BY ANUSHREE BASU-BHALLA

When FINDS opened its doors in 2004, Hong Kong residents, already spoilt for choice with a wide variety of high-end world food, didn't quite expect what was in store for them. At that time, molecular gastronomy was still a lab theory and multisensory mixology was attempted by a select few. Nordic food was still to become the It cuisine. Cut to 2013. FINDS is a little gem, tucked away in the very Asian crevices of Hong Kong's Tsim Tsa Shui area.

An acronym for Finland, Iceland, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden—the countries that inspire FINDS' menu and modernist decor, the 50-cover restaurant is inside a boutique hotel, The Luxe Manor. It has earned critics' accolades and devoted patrons over the years. The man who stands tall behind FINDS is Finnish chef Jaakko Sorsa. Jaakko was poached from Helsinki where he was instrumental in the success of a two Michelin-star restaurant, Chez Dominique. He imports fresh produce for FINDS' kitchen twice a week direct from Finland.

Vodka, of course, is the drink of choice here, mixed into signature cocktails and named after Nordic celebs: Björk is a basil-infused vodka with passion fruit, pineapple, and coconut, while the Edvard Munch, is lime aquavit and ginger wine.

I sample the set dinner menu. First to arrive is the splendidly-plated chef's signature salmon in six ways, that features the fish in six different methods in bite-sized portions. So you have salmon cold-smoked, seared, mousse, pickled, gravad lax, golden roe (to be savoured it in that order). Each element on the plate has a distinct character and clean flavour. Seafood lovers will also relish the platter of succulent scallops topped with melted hazelnut butter. For mains, try the pan-fried tender fillet of halibut that comes with a sprinkling of dill sauce and fingerling potatoes. It is a refreshing dish, apt for spring.

The cosy interiors of FINDS; Salmon in six ways (above)

The photo-finish to the meal comes in the form of a cracking dessert: a daim parfait. The dish has been on FINDS' menu ever since its opening and is nothing short of a legend. Inspired by the flavours of old-fashioned Swedish candy bar Daim, this dessert comes with chef Jaakko's personal touch—a dash of warm 72 per cent dark Valrhona chocolate sauce.

FINDS is an undisputed non-Asian culinary champion and a source of civic pride for the locals. For visitors to Hong Kong, it's a gastronomic sojourn that stays with you long after your meal.

BT MORE RECOMMENDS

- Salmon in six ways; pan-seared halibut
- Daim parfait

Meal for two (without alcohol) HK$1000 plus taxes ✆ +852 2522 9318

A mosaic advertises La Tagliatella's delicious Tuscan tomatoes (Right) The pizza and dessert portions are generous and appeal equally to the diner's eyes. (Below)

A la Italia

La Tagliatella, a popular fine-dining Italian food chain, kicks off its foray in India with an outlet in Delhi's Ambience Mall. BY PIERRE MARIO FITTER

Last year, customers enjoyed 6 million meals at the 135 La Tagliatella franchisees around the world. That's what serving up ingredients straight from the farm gets you. Everything served at this restaurant from the cheese to the tomatoes, wheat and meats arrive straight from carefully selected sources across Europe. It is Italian done right (that said, the sauvignon blanc we drank—a good wine—was Indian. But it was a curious choice at a restaurant known for authenticity).

We started with freshly-baked bread topped with tomatoes, onions and olives. These arrived soft, warm and full of flavour. Fair warning, avoid starters if you want to enjoy your meal. I'll explain why shortly.

For mains, I ordered a peperoncino e funghi tagliatelle. Now I am a big eater and am very partial to Italian but I couldn't finish my meal. This isn't a statement on the quality. The freshly-made pasta was a joy to eat. But the portions were enormous.

And there was more to come. My companion ordered a chicken and turkey ham pizza. Here too, the quality of the meats and pizza dough stood out, as did its mammoth size. I have never allowed a pizza platter to leave my table unfinished. This meal marked a first for me.

For dessert, we had a tre bombe al cioccolato (pictured) and a tiramisu. Both were rich, although perhaps a bit too sweet. This should suit many Indian diners just fine.

La Tagliatella is perfect for someone with a gourmet's palate and a gourmand's appetite. In fact, the restaurant encourages you to share your food. and is thus perfectly suited for team lunches. If you're in Bangalore, look out for a new branch opening soon over there.

MORE RECOMMENDS

- Prosciutto Pizza
- Tre Bombe al cioccolato

Meal for two (with alcohol) ₹ 3,500 plus taxes

Reservations +011-40870747

NO BULL JUST WINE

SOURISH BHATTACHARYYA
Food and Wine Writer

A Shiraz for the Gypsy's Mutton

Find out what happens when a delicate, elegant wine meets a rustic, robust Maharashtrian meal.

Between the bhakarwadi and amba barfi of Chitale Bandhu and the authentic Maharashtrian thali of Shabree on Ferguson College Road, Pune offers excellent options for food. TV host and celebrity chef Nilesh Limaye, a proud custodian of the city's culinary traditions, recently initiated me into the secrets of the Maharashtrian table literally in the middle of nowhere.

We were about 100km from Pune in Sharad Pawar's Baramati, at a village appropriately named Roti. Here, United Spirits Limited has set up its Four Seasons winery and boutique hotel, rising amidst the barren landscape like a forgotten set of a spaghetti Western.

In the dining room we were expecting Cordon Bleu-type fare to go with the Ritu, Four Season's export market wine. Abhay Kewadkar, who along with Fratelli's Piero Masi has put Baramati on the world's wine map, picked the wines. Limaye, who resembles Lenin with his receding hairline, sharp eyes and goatee, surprised us by matching them with Maharashtrian food.

I was particularly struck by the ease with which the **Ritu Shiraz Barrique Reserve 2010** paired with the mutton saoji, a Nagpuri gypsy dish. The saoji uses pepper and garam masala, so it doesn't get chilli hot, which suits nearly every wine. The medium-bodied Ritu also got along with the vegetarian alternative to the saoji— the bharieli vaangi, or stuffed baby brinjals tossed in an onion-tomato gravy. Such discoveries abound when you set out to pair food and wine.

The next day, we had sukka chicken, a coastal dish where the meat is cooked dry with coconut milk and spices. This we paired with a Ritu Chenin Blanc 2012. It seamlessly balanced the acidic foretaste and fruity or sweetish finish. The pairing with the kothimbir vadi (gram flour and coriander patties), though, was the day's biggest surprise. The vadi is intensely flavourful and the pairing was a match made in heaven.

The Maharashtrian table's hallmark is the rusticity of its offerings, yet there were many elegant pairings just waiting to be discovered.

In the boonies of Baramati, we had a 'champagne' breakfast with an as-yet-unreleased sparkling rosé and the Maharashtrian staples of sabudana khichdi and missal pao, a sprouted curry sexed up with chopped onions and a squeeze of fresh lemon, and served with the slightly fermented 'pao' that is so typical of Maharashtra. Believe me, it didn't take us very long to finish half a bottle.

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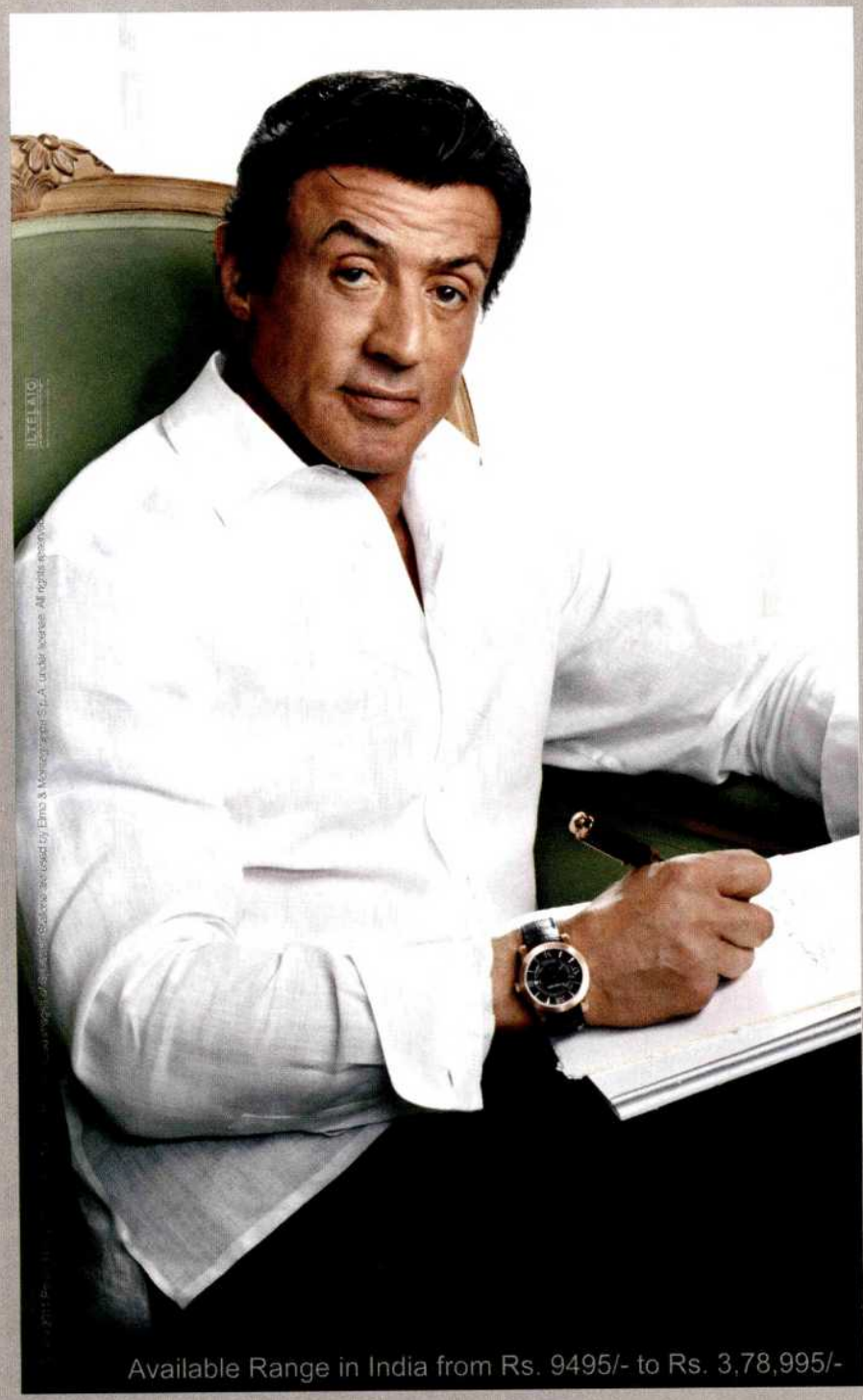

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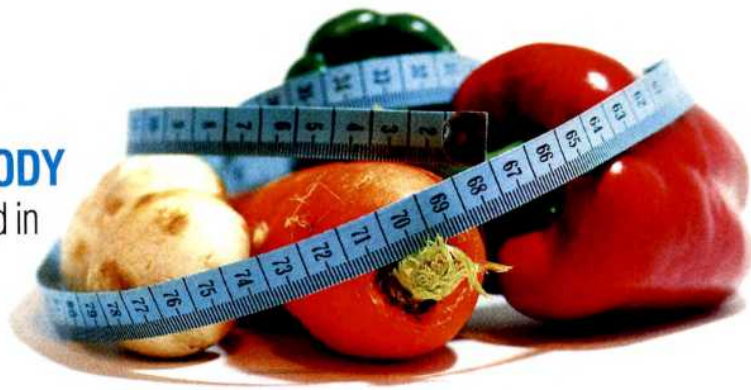

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Tyred And Tested

Brawny engine, strong brakes or auto steering, it all depends on the grip of your car tyre. A four-step buying guide.

STEP 1# GROUNDWORK There's a sidewall on the side of the tyre that lends it stiffness. While a taller, softer sidewall can absorb bumps better, a shorter, stiffer one has better cornering ability and more agile steering response. On the sidewall of every passenger and light-truck tyre is an alphanumeric code — a 'P' or an 'LT' — describing its dimensions, and some even have a maximum load indication. While selecting new tyres, make sure the coding matches the ones you are replacing.

STEP 2# BUY THE WAY Speed rating translates into the tyre's ability to dissipate heat, or prevent heat build-up. The more the heat, the faster it wears out and breaks down. A tyre with a higher speed rating can dissipate more heat on long highway trips. So, if scaling highways is what you are looking at, focus on the speed rating T (118 miles per hour or 189.9 km per hour) and H (130 miles per hour or 209.2 km per hour).

STEP 3# TECH TALK Before you splurge, check the air pressure and sidewall linings of each tyre. The new breed of run-flat tyres contain air and are much more complicated in construction than early rubber rings. However, they are also tough enough to run without air if necessary. In a stiff-sidewall run-flat tyre, there is extra reinforcing rubber that prevents the sidewall of the tyre from deflecting. The sidewall is no stiffer than a conventional tyre in an inner-liner run-flat, but a hard rubber or plastic ring inside it helps keep the sidewall from deflecting.

STEP 4# FUEL FOR THOUGHT Depending on the tyre you select, you will see a 15 to 20 per cent difference in fuel economy. Drivers should keep in mind that the fuel economy is dependent on proper air pressure. Air pressure should be monitored once a week, going by inflation pressures usually outlined in the vehicle owner's manual. This ensures maximum fuel economy.

3 pool games to try this summer

Aqua Golf

You need a 3 x 5 ft floating laminate of artificial turf with Velcro fasteners and twelve floating wiffle practice balls, also layered with Velcro strips. It makes for a three-hole game between two people, with the players taking a dive to dig out the ball each time.

Water Balloon Volley

This requires several water balloons, a net and a swimming pool. One team begins the game by throwing a water balloon over the net to the other team. The opposing team must try to catch it without breaking it. When a balloon breaks, the team throwing it scores a point.

Pool Polo

Set up a net at each end of the pool and divide players into two teams. Each team tries to get the ball into the net to score one point. Players may touch the ball with only one hand at a time, and can't hold it underwater. When players don't have the ball, they can't rest their feet on the bottom or sides of the pool.

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Trim & Proper: Working the Moustache

Angle the hair using a fine-toothed moustache comb. Make sure the moustache is dry, a wet one makes the hair appear longer and you end up cutting more.

Trim first for shape. Start by cutting along the bottom and then the outer edges. Work from the middle towards one side, then begin on the other side.

Now, trim for length. Comb through moustache and cut hair on outside of comb. Be careful to cut slowly and carefully at first, You can always trim more later.

Once done trimming, comb through the moustache one last time. Clip any hair you have missed and use a few drops of serum to moisten it.

Camping In The Cool

THE DUST AND GRIME OF THE BIG CITY BRINGING YOU DOWN? Maybe it's time you set up camp someplace high in the mountains. Here are the basics of zero-degree camping.

NESTING INSTINCT

Four-season mountaineering tents are heavier than three-season backpacking tents, but offer better protection from the wind. Typically, these are dome-shaped structures made of solid fabric (instead of mesh) for imparting more warmth, dual doors for easy access even in bad weather, and extra guy lines for more stability in high winds. Alternatively, you could opt for a bivy sack, which is simply a waterproof breathable overbag for your sleeping bag.

GOODY BAG

Use a sleeping bag that's rated at least 10°F lower than the coldest temperature you are expected to encounter. You can vent the bag if you get too toasty. Winter-rated bags are waterproof and treated with a generous dose of goose down or synthetic insulation. A bag liner will add 8° to 15°F of warmth. Winter bags are distinguished by their draft tubes behind their zippers, draft collars above the shoulders and hoods to keep the heat locked in.

TOP GEAR

As lithium batteries work better in cold weather, carry extras and keep them warm inside your sleeping bag. You can do with traditional hiking boots, but insulated mountaineering boots provide good traction for climbing, traversing, and descending slopes. These should have waterproof oiled leather or plastic exteriors. Carry an extra stove and packs of easy-to-cook one-pot meals, besides a cell foam pad to sit on inside the camp. Other dire essentials are a micro-fleece shirt, a goose-down jacket, windproof jackets and hats.

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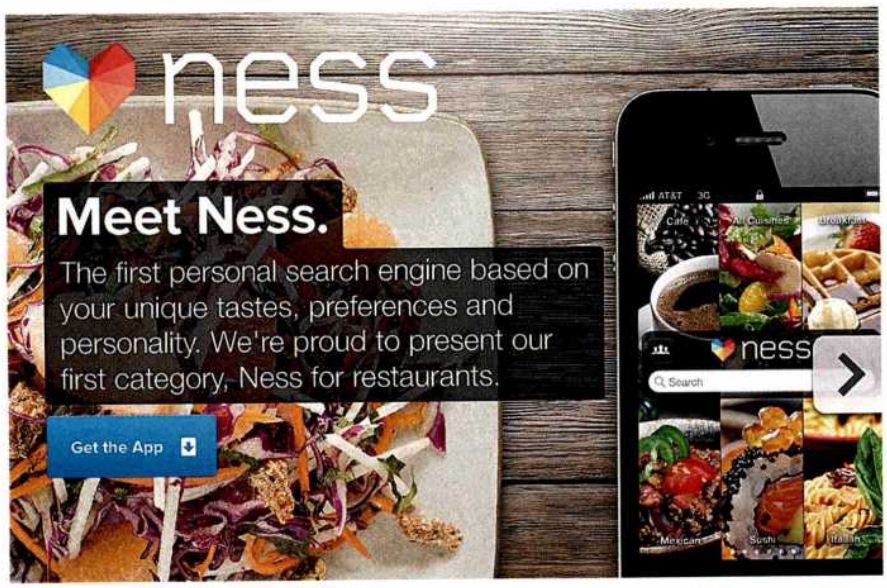

The Ness food app gives recommendations specific to your tastes ▲

CATER TO YOUR EVERY CULINARY CRAVING WITH THESE CUSTOMISED phone apps that address the need of the globetrotting gourmand. **Ness** provides solutions tailormade for individual tastes. After users give their rating for 10 restaurants visited by them, the app uses an algorithm to determine the user's personal tastes and preferences before making customised recommendations. **Savored**, on the other hand, gives you bang for the buck by finding you the best gourmet bargains available in the city to satiate a sophisticated palate. While apps like **Best Coffee** and **Untappd** point you in the direction of the nearest cafe, pub or restaurant, **Chefs Feed** – available in 16 cities across the globe – offers expert advice and must-eat recommendations by some of the world's top chefs. On a more interactive format, **Evernote Food** allows you to archive your experience with photos, maps and tasting notes, and can be used for reference by other users of the app. Never go hungry again while globetrotting.

ROAM SMART

It's impossible to travel without the mobility and convenience of a smartphone, but confusingly, most smartphone providers offer hefty pricing policies which result in international roaming charges that can drain your treasure chest. Come July, travellers visiting the EU will be subject to capped charges at 85% cheaper rates, as a result of which competing phone companies are all set to woo their travelling customers with attractive packages. Additionally, for those who inadvertantly become prey to data roaming charges abroad will have their bill capped at 50 Euros (about ₹3,500) so as to limit the spending incurred by them. And there's more. By the same time next year, prices are expected to further drop by about half.

DESIGNER WINGS ON KLM

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines has roped in designer Hella Jongerius to redesign the interiors of its world business class cabins. With a blue palette, polka dot motif, panels, curtains and cushions, the refurbished cabin will make passengers feel right at home. In addition, seats will be able to recline completely and feature more storage compartments, even as strategically placed TV screens and partitions ensure greater privacy than ever before. With the changes being carried out in the fleet's Boeing 747-400s, the first such flight will take wing in July.

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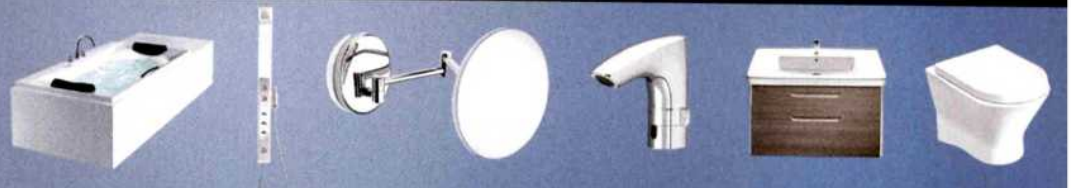

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STYLE IN THE SKIES

Come June, the cabin crew aboard Richard Branson's Virgin Atlantic airline will be seen donning outfits designed by Dame Vivienne Westwood. While the women will wear the classic Virgin red with double-breasted jackets and pencil skirts nipped in at the waist, the men will be dressed in a rich burgundy version of the three-piece-suit tailored in the classic British style.

THE AMAN GOES TO VENICE

If you are planning on an Italian getaway this summer, you may want to make the brand new Aman Canal Grande Venice your home. It is located at the heritage Palazzo Papadopoli in the historic San Polo district, at a walking distance from the famous Rialto Bridge. Amanresorts' latest Mediterranean offering houses 24 beautifully designed suites that reflect its locality's heritage and all the rococo splendour you may expect from

The exquisite Aman Canal Grande Venice is the season's newest must-visit property ▲

Venice. With a fitting approach (by water, of course), you arrive in a gondola at a reception hall replete with soaring ceilings and historic frescoes. Inside, the interiors combine the original rococo and neo-renaissance styles while maintaining the brand's trademark brand of contemporary-classic. The property – which houses a canal-view bar, a library, games room, roof terrace, a main dining room that offers delicious Asian fare and a spa – will open its doors on June 1. An absolute must-visit.

STORM IN A TEA MUG

When you're on vacation, even the tiniest activity can seem like a chore. If that's a sentiment you can relate to, then this quirky new product is just the thing for you. Apparently, stirring coffee is the scourge of the vacationing classes. Consequently, this self-stirring mug comes as a grea relief for everybody who needs a cuppa before starting the day. The aluminium mug features an electric stirrer at the bottom, which whips up your beverage till it's all frothed up. A sip-through lid prevents spillage, and ensures that your coffee stays inside the mug. Priced at around ₹1,000 and available at www.thinkgeek.com, it's probably just what you need.

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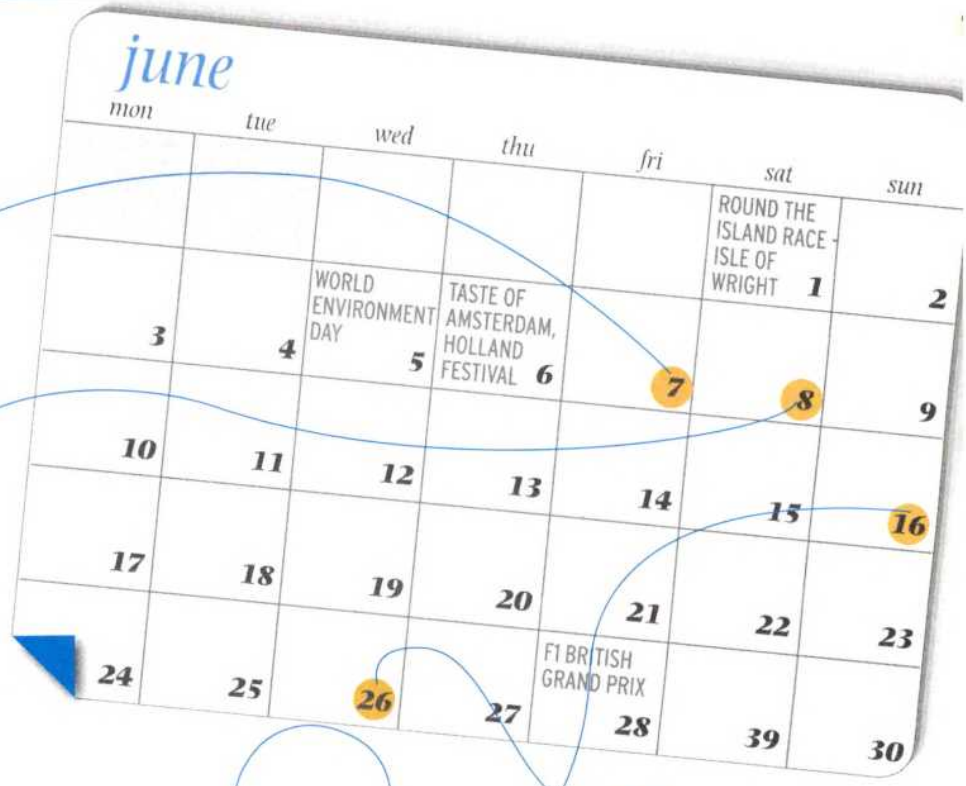

7-9 June

MINT POLO IN THE PARK

Hurlingham Park in Fulham will host one of London's most hotly anticipated sporting and social events for the fifth consecutive year, making its hallowed turf thunder with the galloping of world-class polo ponies. Competing in the event will be teams from Sydney, Abu Dhabi, Moscow and New Delhi, besides the defending champions from London. Eat, drink, shop and socialise with

thousands of guests at this world-class event. Tickets are available at www.polointheparklondon.com.

8-30 June

ISTANBUL SHOPPING FEST

The 21-day annual shopping extravaganza in Istanbul, Turkey, will be spread across hundreds of its bazaars and exciting shopping centres. Avail fabulous discounts on a range of products and attend concerts featuring famous performers. Also enjoy street parties, fashion shows, and the city's night life for a vacation like none other. Details on www.istshopfest.com

16-20 June

VINEXPO BORDEAUX

Here's another reason to visit Bordeaux, the beautiful wine-rich province of France, this summer. Vinexpo, dating back to 1981, is the world's biggest wine and spirits exhibition. Make the most of tasting sessions hosted by liquor giants and the most humble family-owned producers who showcase labels under one roof. For reservations, log on to vinexpo.com.

26-30 June

PARIS MEN FASHION WEEK

The fashion capital of the world has set the stage for the Fall/ Winter 2014 edition of global fashion. From spectacular shows featuring iconic designs and the latest technology in garment manufacturing to up-to-the-minute analysis, the Paris Fashion Week is a mecca for style lovers. For schedules, visit modeaparis.com/en/fashion-shows.

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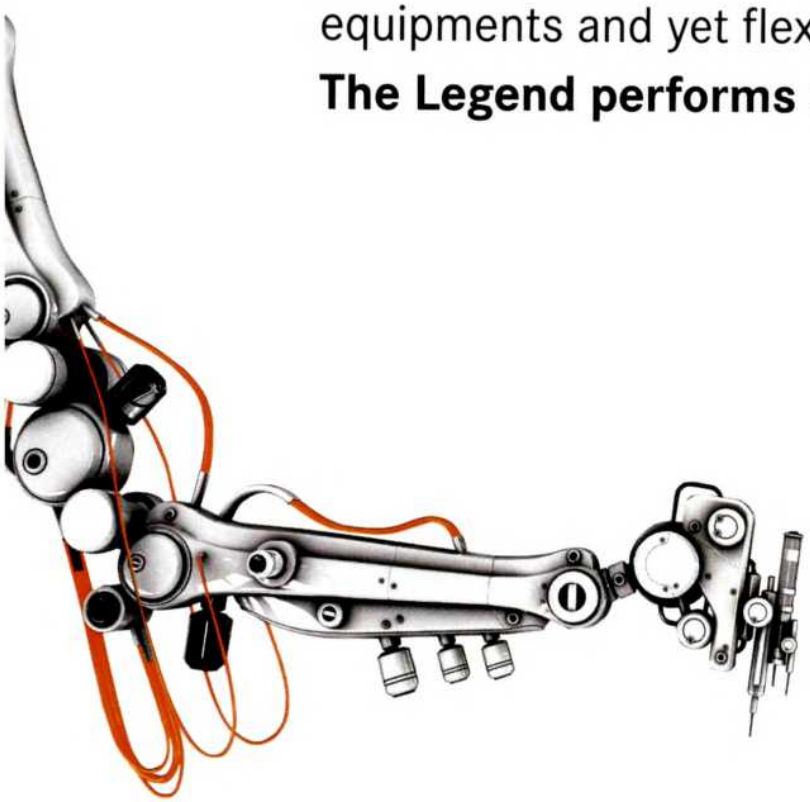
The Legend performs much more than that!



CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY CENTRAL LIBRARY

The automation industry is not only one of the leading manufacturing sectors, but also backbone of numerous industries. The challenge is that the cables have to go through millions of movement cycles in its lifetime and also take care of space constraints. This is where Lapp's ÖLFLEX® takes the centre stage. The ÖLFLEX® cable is perfect for locations with space constraints as it has a small cross sectional area. It handles vigorous, high speed automated machines and withstands torsion stress in robotic applications. Further its joint free construction reduces data attenuation. ÖLFLEX® covers diverse application areas such as plant engineering and construction, factory automation and building automation. **Outperform with the Legend!**

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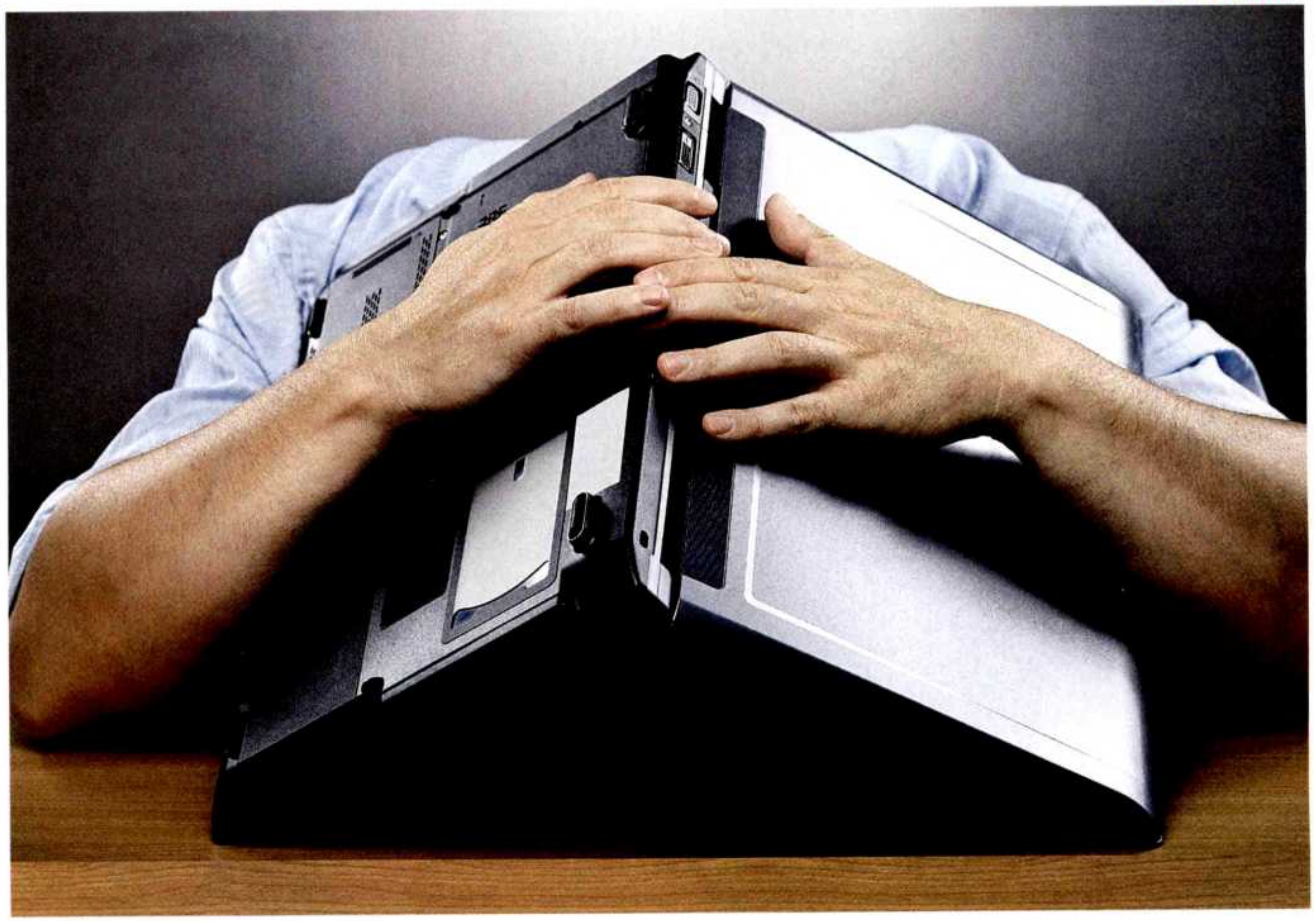
LAPP INDIA

Stressing on facts

Today's office-goer is no stranger to stress. However, to combat the phenomenon, he should first learn to tell fact from fiction

From Men'sHealth



CLAIM 1: Black tea helps you de-stress

HIT ☑ MISS ☐

Everybody goes ga-ga over green, as far as tea is concerned. However, when it comes to combating stress, black tea could be just as beneficial as it is more exotic cousin. A London-based study has proved that black tea increases the threshold of the nerves, and people who drink it are able to de-stress way faster than those who don't.

CLAIM 2: Alcohol reduces stress

HIT ☐ MISS ☑

If 'hit the bottle' is the first conscious thought to cross your mind after a nasty argument with the boss, a serious rethink is in order. Though alcohol alters your senses and numbs your system, it works as a depressant.

CLAIM 3: Stress can never be good for you

HIT ☐ MISS ☑

This may not seem like particularly great advice but, in some cases, it's better to just give in to stress. When the brain perceives physical or psychological stress, it starts pumping chemicals that make your heart beat faster, increase blood pressure and sharpen senses. No harm done once in a way.

CLAIM 4: No obvious symptoms, no stress

HIT ☐ MISS ☑

You have lost that spring in your step and gained a couple of pounds, but that cannot mean you are stressed, can it? Experts beg to differ, stating that lack of obvious symptoms does not necessarily denote the absence of stress. Some not-so-obvious symptoms are obesity, fatigue, insomnia and digestive issues.

Be There! Do That!

RENDEZ-VOUS IN FRANCE!

A "Be There! Do That!" beach holiday in Paris? Yes, it is possible! Plan a July-August escapade to the City of Lights to experience the Paris Plages, an annual transformation of parts of Paris into a beach. A stroll along the banks of the Seine takes you past happy and content Parisians comfortably soaking up the sun and making the most of the glorious sunshine. Sandy beaches, palm trees, festive events, water sports, cultural programmes all contribute to Paris' makeover as a seaside resort with a difference. If the urge to do absolutely nothing takes over, then simply stretch out on a deck chair and relax! Life is truly a beach on this sunny "Be There! Do That!" Parisian holiday! More information is available on www.parisinfo.com.

For unique experiences such as this and more, log on to: www.rendezvousenfrance.com.

PARIS Convention and Visitors Bureau

AIRFRANCE

rendezvousenfrance.com

mind&body

Slim down, fat cat

Corporate lifestyle starting to show on your waistline? It doesn't have to.

Eat sensibly
Beware of that extra morsel. Curb your appetite by starting your meal with a glass of water or a bowl of corn. Do not skip meals, it only results in overeating later.

Party soft
While corporate dinners enhance business networking, they also stretch your waistline because you are likely to binge on the free food. Have a low-calorie snack before landing there, so you consume less.

Watch your calories
Try switching to low-fat alternatives. Opt for low-fat milk and low-cream cheese, and use olive or canola oil for cooking. If you feel like a snack, go for an apple.

Stretch those legs
While a regular workout routine may be tough, try to steal some time in between to walk. If you aren't too late for work, take the stairs. On weekends, forsake your siesta for a trip to the gym.

Run Personal VISIOWEB

SO YOU HAVE EMAILS TO CHECK and there's this movie you want to watch... might as well skip your treadmill workout for the day, huh? Well, not if you possess the Run Personal VISIOWEB. This baby comes equipped with an internet connection, integrated 19" TV screen, and an iPhone/iPod link. It has a top speed of 18 kmph and possesses a maximum incline of 15 per cent. Oops! Did you just run out of reasons to skip running?

Price: On request

THAT'S A SMART PHONE!

Quit twiddling your thumbs on your way to work. Instead, get busy with these mobile phone apps which promise to build your mental muscle

IQ TEST
This free-to-download 4-star app uses time-limited questions to calculate your IQ rating. Keep practising and you'll soon develop a Schwarzenegger of a mental muscle.

IQ BOOST
Tasks are based on the 'dual n-back' testing method, which improves your short-term memory. It has a range of visual game modes and progress reports.

I LUV MOZART
Take advantage of the Mozart Effect on the move, with the top 10 pieces rated to raise your IQ. It also has a before-and-after test to gauge your improvement.

HIGH IQ TEST
Developed by psychologists, this app tests everything from math to visual memory, promising you'll "never do the same test twice".

IMPROVE YOUR IQ WITH PROVEN METHOD
This clumsily named app scores well. It combines visual puzzles with written logic to better brain fitness.

From Men's Health

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Say No To Baldness

No Hair Wastage | **No Deep Incisions** | **No Scars**

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- Enable Hair Regrowth
- Treatment For Dandruff
- Treat Broken & Damaged Hair

Baldness

Bring back your lost hair

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top shop

Parrot AR.Drone 2.0

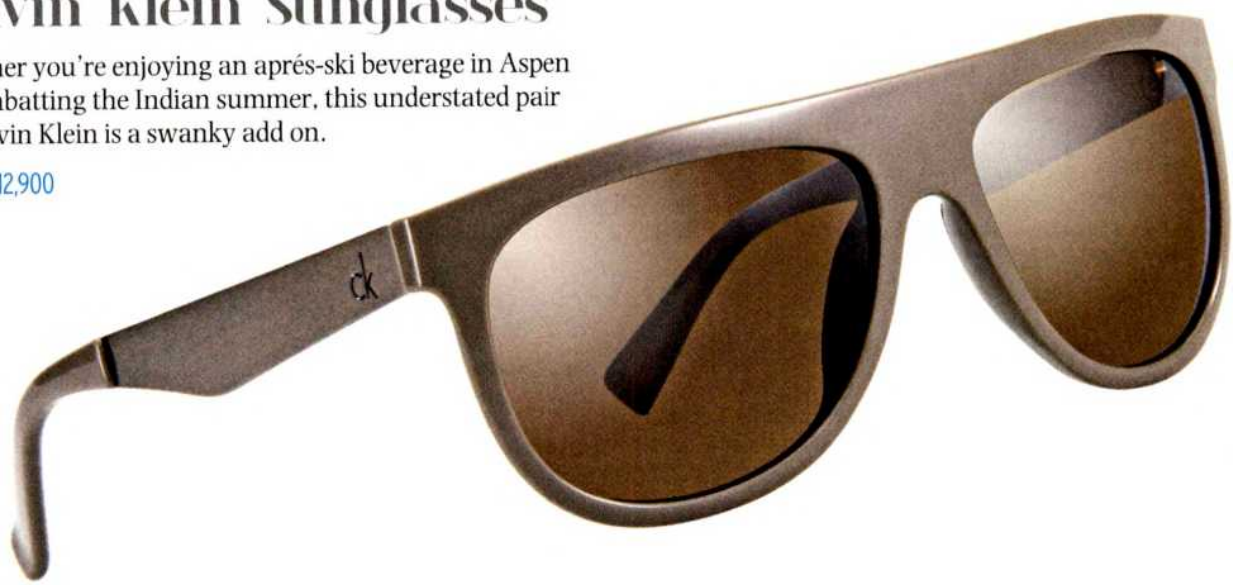
This futuristic quadrocopter proves that corporate life will never kill the child in you. The GPS-enabled AR Drone 2.0 puts you in the pilot's seat with live footage being streamed and recorded directly on your smartphone or tablet, via an in-built 720p HD camera. With a single touch on your screen, you can take off, land, hover or flip!

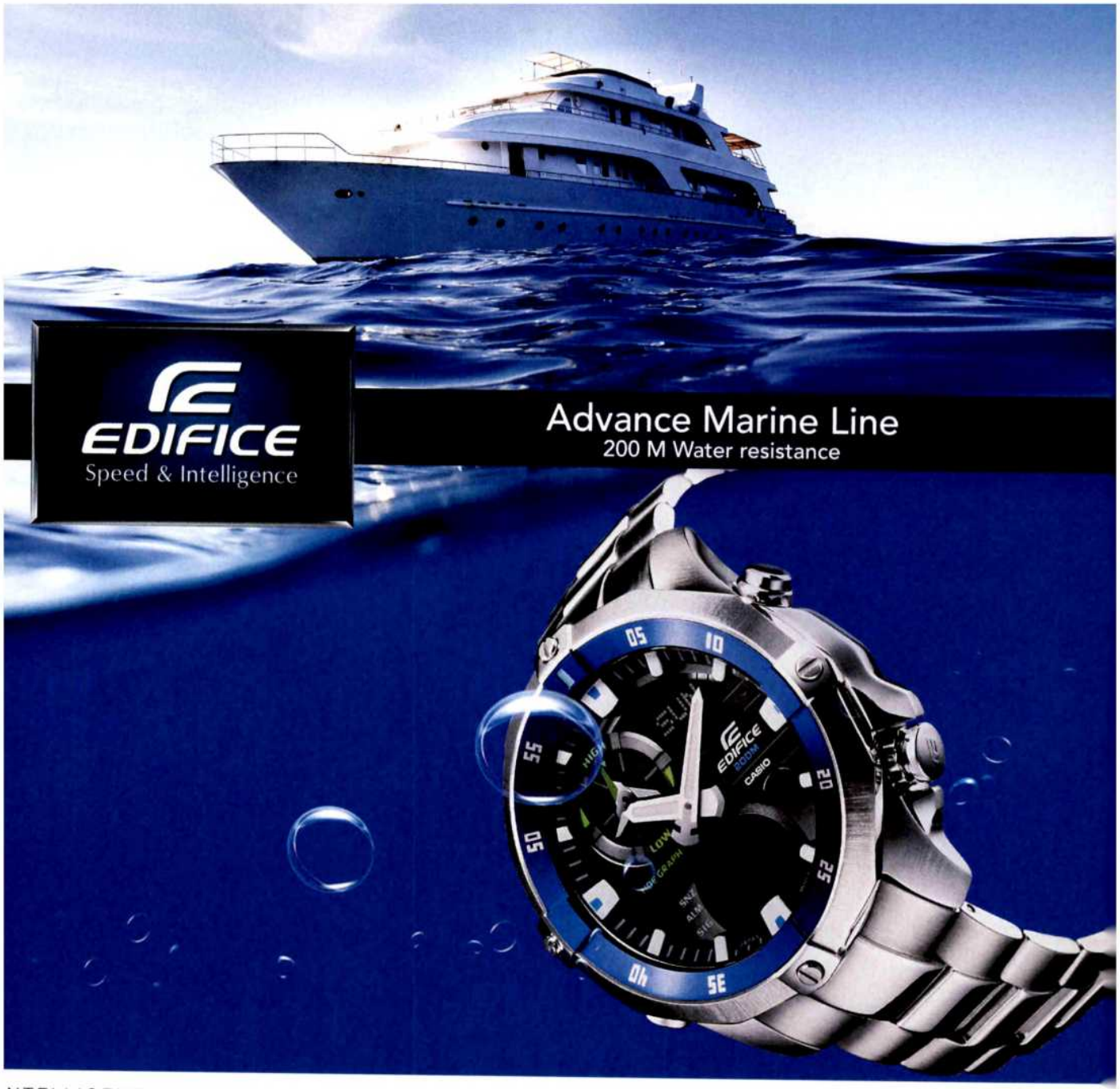
Price: ₹31,990 (approx)

Calvin Klein Sunglasses

Whether you're enjoying an aprés-ski beverage in Aspen or combatting the Indian summer, this understated pair by Calvin Klein is a swanky add on.

Price: ₹12,900





NTELLIGENT TIMING

Tide graph

Tide Indicator featuring a propeller motif design.

Moon data

Equipped with a moon data display of the waxing and waning of the moon.

Thermometer

Equipped with a temperature sensor.

Super Illuminator

High-brightness LED light illuminating the dial with brilliant marine blue lighting.

SMART DESIGN

One-directional rotating bezel

One-directional rotating bezel with a dual structure comprising aluminium and stainless steel.

unctions • Magnetic resistant • Tide graph • Moon data • Thermometer • World time • 1/100-second stopwatch • 20-bar water resistance • LED light (Super Illuminator) • Countdown timer • Full auto-calendar • 5 daily alarms

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CASIO®

top shop

Canali Trousers

Energise your summer wardrobe with a shot of canary yellowand a dash of sophisticated grey via Canali's summer cotton trousers. Team these quarter pocket stand-out pieces with a simple grey crew neck T-shirt for a day of golf away from work.

Price: On request

Canon EOS Rebel SL1

Dubbed as the world's smallest and lightest DSLR camera, the EOS Rebel SL1 is miniature in size but big on performance. It packs a 18.0 megapixel CMOS sensor and a speedy DIGIC 5 image processor in a body that weighs only 405g. Here's a DSLR that can be your perfect travel mate.

Price: $799.99 (₹43,219) approx

Louis Vuitton TR4 Trolley

Louis Vuitton's four-wheeled wonde the TR4 joins the Maison's bandwag of luxury travel luggage. Besides impeccable craftsmanship, it promises to fulfill every function demanded by a high-flier.

Price: On request

Kenzo Homme Sport

It doesn't hurt to smell good while sealing a deal. The Sport edition by Kenzo for men is a woody-spicy scent re-freshed with citrusy flavours. Dab it before a big meeting, game of squash or even a power workout at the gym.

Price: ₹4,050 for 50ml

Fly across the Himalayas and discover the land of a thousand pleasures

If it's on your mind, it's in China: History, culture, religion, sport, beaches, mountains, recreation, food and drink, nightlife, shopping and education, not to forget, avenues for business.

- **Sightseeing: History, Beaches, Mountains and Nightlife**

  Every square inch of China has a story to tell. Only in China can you still see signs of the Stone Age, find a giant Buddha statue overlooking a confluence of three rivers and walk through a palace of 8,600 rooms. Only a visit will reveal the many enchanting facets of this ancient land.

- **Shopping: Bring home everything from antiques to designer dresses**

  At every street corner, in every bazaar, expect to be overwhelmed by the sheer profusion of inspired offerings too numerous to be listed on a single page.

- **Food: Authentic flavours waft everywhere**

  Eight different schools of Chinese cuisine await your arrival. Delicate Jiangsu and Zhejiang; rustic Shandong and Anhui; refined Guangdong and Fujian; and the artistic Sichuan and Hunan: each one brings to the table the distinct flavours of its region and culture.

- **Golf: Get ready for your afternoon game in China**

  If you're planning a golfing holiday away from India, fly your bag over the Himalayas. Hundreds of signature courses spread across most cities including the most famous Mission Hills, Asia's largest golfing community await your arrival in China.

- **MICE: Time to go off the beaten track**

  Before you choose the destination for your next meeting, conference, exhibition or event, consider crossing the Himalayas into the rarified atmosphere of global commerce. Each commercial hub unfurls its unique red carpet along with world class infrastructure: hotels replete with 21st century amenities.

Active Cotton

Today's athletes demand it all – a perfect fit, fashion forward styling, comfortable fabrics, and above all performance. Nothing is more obnoxious than active wear that distracts you from focusing on your workout. People generally prefer the comfort and softness of cotton over synthetics, however cotton's propensity to absorb moisture exceptionally well can often be a negative when it comes to performance apparel. Now with the development of moisture management technologies for cotton, athletes can enjoy the fast-drying and moisture-wicking performance of synthetic fibres but in the comfort and softness of natural cotton.

Moisture wicking means that the fabric moves moisture away from the body. WICKING WINDOWS ™ is a unique moisture management technology developed by Cotton Incorporated for cotton that eliminates the feeling of wet, saturated fabric against the body. The technology forces the transfer of moisture away from the skin to the outside of the fabric where it can evaporate, keeping you drier and more comfortable during exercise. It also reduces clinging to the skin, which can cause irritation and chafing. Under Armor Charged Cotton ™ is probably the most well know product line using this technology.

TransDRY ®, also developed by Cotton Incorporated, is opening up the athletic wear industry for cotton. TransDRY ®fabrics absorb less and don't become oversaturated during exercise, which allows them to dry faster. Polarmax ®, Puma Golf, Max Ride and Bobby Jones are some of the brands with this technology. Antimicrobial is another technology to consider for your active wear. Clothing with this treatment prevents or inhibits the growth of bacteria, minimizing odour. SmartSilver ® is one product to consider. It is currently used in high-end cotton lines of undergarments, undershirts and socks. Now some of your favourite cotton clothes have technology that helps them dry faster, keep you dry and comfortable even under the most challenging circumstances.

OUR GUIDE TO THE GOOD LIFE

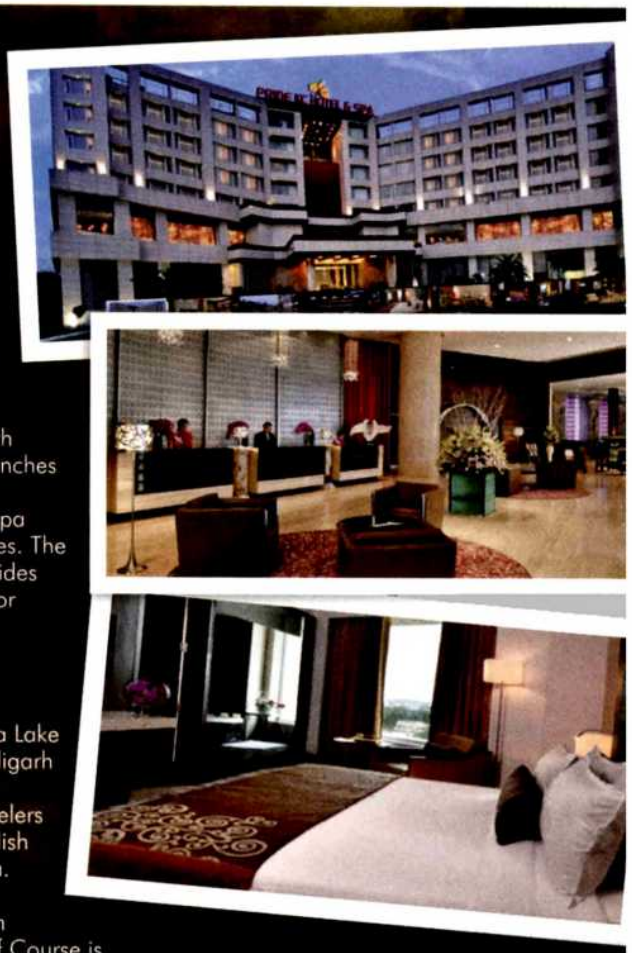
'There's more to life than work.'

BT More's motto has been to guide and groom the young and spirited Indian corporate male. With the latest in travel, hospitality, fashion, food, watches, automobiles, gadgets, spirits, cigars and accessories, we strive to turn our readers into connoisseurs of the good life. Be it picking out a linen suit for the summer, customising a mean machine, mixing a molecular drink or heading out on a solo trek to someplace in the middle of nowhere, we've believed in making life both simple and complicated. Our sixth anniversary special celebrates the brands that have grown with us. So, here's an ode to the elements of luxury that have shaped our journey and touched your lives.

An escape to Paradise

Pride KC Hotel and SPA

Panchkula



PRIDE KC HOTEL & SPA, is a upmarket 5 star hotel with 127 rooms, extensive convention and conference facilities, a state of the art Spa & Health Club, Swimming Pool, round the clock multi cuisine Coffee Shop, a Specialty Indian Restaurant, Business Centre & well equipped Bar. The Hotel is located adjacent to the 18 Hole Panchkula Golf Course. The Hotel offers the ideal venue for all golf enthusiasts who can Tee Off in style as the golf course is located right next to the hotel.

The Hotel offers a choice of 8 banquet halls & an exclusive board room with ample parking space for weddings, conferences, get togethers, product launches etc., events etc.

Offering 5-star accommodation in Panchkula City, The Pride K C Hotel & Spa also has an outdoor pool, a private helipad and state-of-the-art spa facilities. The Spa which is professionally run by well trained International Therapists provides an ideal platform for de-stressing, rejuvenation & a total body makeover. For fitness enthusiasts, the hotel has a well equipped gymnasium.

The hotel also features a Rooftop Helipad – the only hotel in Panchkula & Chandigarh to offer this facility. All its modern guestrooms come with air conditioning and free Wi-Fi.

At the foot of Morni Hills, it is just a 20-minute drive from the scenic Sukhna Lake and Rock Garden. The hotel is ideally located in close vicinity to the Chandigarh Airport & the industrial hubs of Chandigarh & Panchkula. The Highway connecting to Shimla is also nearby. The hotel offers business & leisure travelers an oasis of luxury and comfort. The Pride KC Hotel & Spa is all set to establish new standards of hospitality in the vibrant cities of Chandigarh & Panchkula.

KC Royal Park is 7 km from Chandigarh Airport and 8 km from Chandigarh Railway Station. The city centre is 12 km away. The 18-hole Panchkula Golf Course is located right next to the hotel.

SKORE GOES MOBILE

SKORE condoms from the house of TTK-PDL, the pioneer and leader in the condom category, unveiled India's first m-commerce platform for condom shopping. The new mobile store, a first of its kind, will allow the customers to purchase condoms from their Internet-enabled mobile phones at their convenience, privacy and utmost secrecy. Now, with this new m-store, customers can have access to the entire range of SKORE products which includes colored, climax delay, flavored and dotted condoms. SKORE believes that its mobile service will redefine shopping experience by making it personal, safe and fast.

Customers can log on to: www.m.skorecondoms.com / www.skorecondoms.com to buy condoms the easiest way.

Etched in Time

To mark our sixth anniversary, we celebrate iconic writing instruments launched over the last six years

Visconti Edvard Munch The Scream

With this pen, Visconti pays homage to renowned Norwegian artist Edvard Munch and his much-coveted work, *The Scream* (circa 1893). Crafted in black resin with sterling silver appointments, the piston-filled masterpiece is enhanced with a 14-carat gold nib. Since its launch in 2009, only 338 pieces have been available worldwide.
Price: ₹94,500.

2008 2009 2010

Tibaldi Phoenix and Dragon Box Set

The Dragon and the Phoenix – both highly revered Chinese mythology symbols – have found their way into Tibaldi's exquisite set of fountain pens. Handpainted with intricate detailing, the writing instrument features a winding cap and an 18-carat gold nib. First launched in 2008, these were limited to just 99 pieces. Tibaldi's Phoenix and Dragon fountain pen box set is priced at ₹5.54 lakh.

Montegrappa Bruce Lee Fountain Pen

Montegrappa commemorated the 70th birth anniversary of martial arts legend Bruce Lee with this pen of significance (a part of the marquee's Icon series). While the cap and barrel feature exquisitely carved sterling dragons, the nib – in 18-carat gold – features the profile of the martial arts star and the crown fashions a perfect Yin-Yang. Available only through auction with prices estimated at ₹27 lakh onwards.

Caran d'Ache Yuri Gagarin

To mark the 50th anniversary of the first manned spaceflight on April 12, 1961, Caran d'Ache created a prestigious Yuri Gagarin Limited Edition that paid homage to the Russian astronaut. Only 50 fountain pens and 50 roller pens – all gold-plated – were produced for the edition. The pens are made of black lacquer, the cap features Gagarin in his spacesuit, and the clip is set with a black diamond – all evoking the infinity and darkness of space as well as the sparkle of the stars. Price on request.

Graf Von Faber Castell Pen of the Year 2012

An ode to supreme craftsmanship, Faber Castell's Pen of the Year 2012 blends the hue, textures, and richness of 1,700-year-old German wetland oakwood and yellow gold. The intricate and detailed process of the 24-carat gold leaf gilding technique used in the instrument dates back to the Egyptian era, over 4,000 years ago, and the crown features a chessboard-faceted citrine gemstone. This handcrafted marvel is limited to 1,500 pieces. Price: ₹2.92 lakh.

2011

2012

2013

Montblanc Albert Einstein

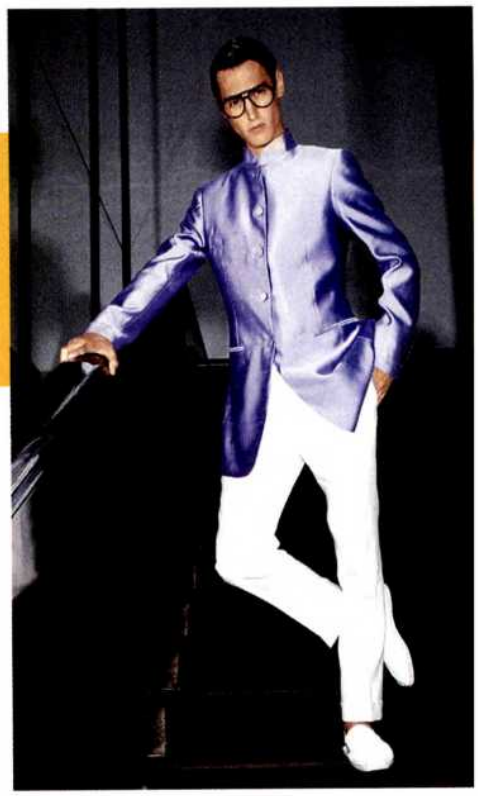
Montblanc's Albert Einstein writing instrument, a part of the marquee's Great Characters Edition 2013, is the most notable collector's item this year. Adequately futuristic in its aesthetics, the pen pays homage to the $E=MC^2$ genius. It is limited to 3,000 pieces, the number that represents roughly one hundredth of the value so essential to Einstein's vision of the universe. Price on request.

Defining Fashion

BT More celebrates important milestones in men's fashion by presenting the most unique products and innovations by top brands over the years.

The Gommino Effect

While we were all busy concentrating on the shoe, the elves at TOD's worked silently on its underbelly creating what went on to become an iconic innovation for the brand. The result, a practical albeit aesthetically attractive sole dotted with tiny pebble-like rubber structures that add a dimension to the loafer even from the downside-up. Coined the Gommino, an Italian name translated to mean 'rubber tip', this idea was born in the late 1970s to satisfy a void for a beautiful, well made shoe, which could be worn in a professional, elegant or casual environment. Combining classic Italian style with comfort and practicality, the casual-chic moccasin took inspiration from the driving shoes used in the 50s and established its trademark through a sole covered with 133 rubber pebbles in the same colour as the leather used for the shoe. There are over 100 steps involved. From hand cutting the pieces that form the basic structure to sewing together all of the individual parts, each component is individually treated, and checked before being assembled into its final form. The entire process is done by hand by an artisan specifically qualified to the task. Evolving over the years, this model has been updated multiple times, resulting in several distinct models, each maintaining the brand's unique style. Tod's entered the Indian market six years ago, and today, the Gommino loafer has come to define style and comfort, and is an essential element in the wardrobe of the fashion forward male.



Bandhgala goes Global

To quote the man behind the label, the new Bandhgala jacket by Tom Ford has been conceptualised and created specifically for the desi market to address the Indian male's "sense of style that comes from a tradition of dressing to celebrate." Having always been a fan of the Nehru jacket at the core of Indian tradition, the designer recreated the piece, endowing it with his eponymous label's signature sartorial standards and exclusively woven fabric. It has today become one of its most iconic pieces, combining British sartorialism, an Italian finish and exotic eastern lines. This stylish jacket is fabricated following a canvas construction which enables the garment to take its form from the contours of the body and allow natural movement. The cut and fit of the garment have been meticulously studied to ensure that it acts as a second skin. The fabrics on offer include luxurious, dark evening wool as well as various jewel tone colours of shantung, from topaz and steel blue to dusty lilac. Baring all the elements of an evening jacket from brand Tom Ford, including matching buttons in grosgrain or satin and an evening cuff detail, few launches have had an international impact like this.

100 Years of Zegna

One of the most notable labels to come out of Italy, Ermenegildo Zegna completed 100 years in 2010. To mark the momentous occasion, the brand collaborated with Tateossianto to develop a pair of limited edition cufflinks. Produced in just 100 pieces, this solid 18-carat gold cufflink replicates the Zegna centennial seal and is embedded with diamonds. Each pair has been designed in London and meticulously handcrafted by the Tateossian goldsmiths of Italy.

The Kei to Canali

Taking a traditional staple and stripping it down to its skeletal structure only to rebuild and restructure it with a contemporary twist, Canali's Kei jacket is an exemplary example of the brand's love for innovation. Though a Kei has neither internal structure nor lining, it possesses impeccably sharp lines that are softened by the lack of thickness and reduced padding. Its natural lines magnify the shoulders, making them the point of focus. Launched in 2009, it transformed a dated concept into a versatile garment that doubles up as a shirt in the summer and a layer in winter. Bringing together tailoring inspired by the Neapolitan tradition and a typically Lombard style of execution, the Kei epitomises all things Italian and is a unique piece that embodies the values of Canali's sartorial world.

Mon Louis Vuitton

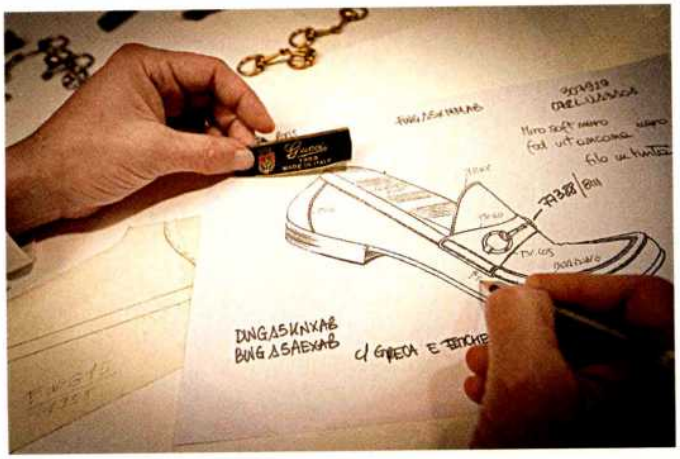
For Louis Vuitton, exclusivity and travel are values that lie at the core of the brand. To this end, they've made a tradition of undertaking special orders for catering to every whim of their clients. Customise your Louis Vuitton article by selecting from one of two types of personalisation – hot-stamp your initials onto a wide selection of soft leather goods and accessories, or hand-paint them onto hard-sided luggage. Going a step further, the brand proposed a new concept called Mon Monogram in 2008. A set of two-tone initials of up to three letters, either vertical or diagonal stripes or a combination of both initials and stripes, can be chosen from a range of 17 different colours. Computer simulation helps you visualise exactly how your bag will look, and your unique product is created and hand assembled over a period of six to eight weeks before being delivered to you.

B is for Burberry

In the sartorial universe, you know you've gone from being a boy to a man when you've got a suit to show for it. And not just any suit at that. Go the whole nine yards and make it a bespoke Burberry. The brand's legacy of tailoring stands lean and strong on the tenets of fabric innovation, modern design and traditional hand-finished details. What you get is an understated silhouette with a distinct British attitude. The fabric used is produced in English and Italian mills exclusive to Burberry, the suit is designed by the brand's top designers in London, and each one is tailored and hand-stitched by seasoned tailors in Italy. Available in three distinct fits – slim, modern and classic – each masterpiece defines you as a man.

Gucci's Horsebit Loafer

Gucci's trademark iconic Horsebit loafer – the one that's been worn by the likes of Clark Gable; the one that depicts the double ring and bar motif from the equestrian world; the one that was inducted into the permanent collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1985 – turned 60 last year. To mark the anniversary of what has come to be known as 'the most iconic Gucci shoe ever made', was the brand's exclusive 1953 collection. Released just last year and fashioned to match current styles, the collection is available in a bold combination of colours and material from patent leather and suede to exotic crocodile and python, featuring a new rendition of the equestrian hardware. For further detailing, each shoe carries a special label with the "Gucci 1953 Made in Italy" script to recall the shoe's legacy.



Paul Smith Stripes

Paul Smith's colourful association with the mini has become synonymous with the brand's identity. First executed in 1999 to mark the 40th anniversary of the Mini Cooper, the aesthetic appeal of this idea made it a seasonal regular in the brand's identity. Accessories have always been key to the brand, and for the past few years, the 'mini on location' has been used to brandish various products within this division to herald the new season. Here's how the tradition works: the mini car, painted in the iconic Paul Smith multi-stripe, is driven and parked at a different locations – from the forest, to outside one of the brand's stores, or even indoors. A photo shoot is carried out and the resulting image becomes the print of the season for a number of products, including bags and wallets. Furthermore, it is used as a way of adding character and a signature look to the brand's stores.

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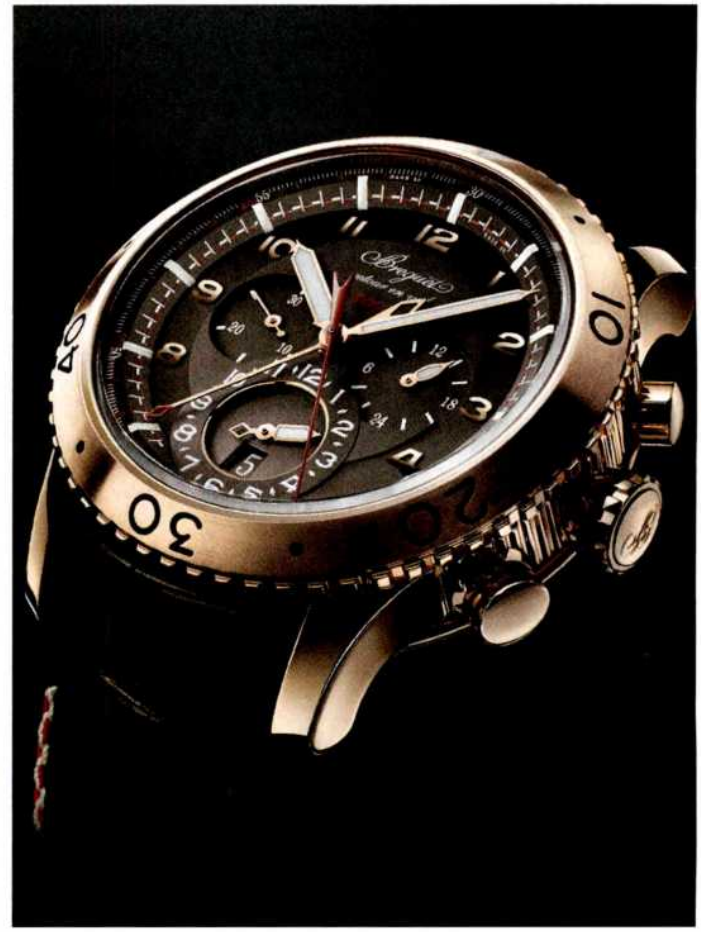
Watch Out

The iconic timepieces that upped the ante in time-telling across the globe



We say Breguet

There's no denying that Breguet's history is as old as that of Swiss watchmaking itself, with historical figures such as Marie Antoinette, Napoleon Bonaparte, Queen Victoria and sultans of the Ottoman Empire featuring in its list of patrons. It was with the backing of such a legacy that Breguet began its journey in Switzerland's watch-making districts. This year too, Breguet engaged onlookers with yet another reflective approach to time. Its pre-Baselworld showcase was Type XXII, an 18-carat rose-gold rendition of the first series-made mechanical chronograph with A 10 Hz frequency. The technical exploit, namely the 72,000 vibrations per hour and the high regulating power, is crafted in lightweight silicon to prevent lubrication issues. The flyback function allows the totaliser to instantly return to zero in the same operation. As for appearance, its luminous markers and distinct red hands offer a striking contrast on a chocolate brown dial. Watch connoisseurs now have something to talk about until Breguet makes its next release.

BT More & Breguet: Through The Years

2010

Classique 7337

Features a moon-phase indicator on a solid silver 18-carat guilloche-patterned dial

2012

Marine Royale

Luminous blue steel hands and roman markers stand out against a hand-engraved silver dial.

2012

Marie-Antoinette Dentelle

This design, inspired by the queen's love for lace, is decked with 70 brilliant cut diamonds and a mother-of-pearl dial.

2011

Marine Tourbillon

The openworked jewel-studded complication was unleashed onto the face of the solid gold dial.

Zenith Montre d'Aeronef Type 20 Tourbillon

Zenith's tryst with aviation, dating back to the early 1900s, was through complex instruments that dealt with magnetic flux, temperature variations and aircraft vibrations. The Type 20 first appeared in 1938 on the instrument panels of a number of planes, with French fighter aircraft Caudron Simon C.635 being the most prominent. It's needless to say that the 2013 pilot watch is a worthy heir of the brand's airborne legacy. Powered by the automatic El Primero 4035 D chronograph caliber, the tourbillon has a patented date display on a disc surrounding the carriage, and a side case that bears the Swiss letters HB – a nod to Swiss aviation registration. The history best comes across in a classic 40 mm size and large luminous Arabic numerals, which offers impeccable readability to pilots. However, immediately attracting your attention to the titanium and rose gold model is the skeletonised rotating carriage positioned at 11' o clock. High-flyers now have another reason to spread their wings, and wrists.

BT More Favourite

El Primero Chronomaster 1969 (2012) features a silvered sunburst finish that dramatically joins up with the 282 part open-worked movement.

Raymond Weil Maestro 4830

Amidst the high-drama of Grande complications and haute joaillerie, there's always that one classic that holds its own. This Basel, its Raymond Weil's Maestro 4830. The neatly rounded 41.5 mm case has simple lugs and pushers that flank the RW-embossed crown. The dial is a classic two-register chronograph with two clean and simple dials that indicate running seconds on the right and a 30-minute counter on the left. Lovers of vintage must go for the rose gold case that has matching hands and comes in a classic brown leather strap. A dressier version is the one with the stainless steel bracelet, which showcases the play of blued steel hands on its sunburst pattern dial. The only aspect that won't appeal to purists is the lack of a mechanically wound movement, but the powerful caliber RW 7230 ETA-based automatic movement makes up for it with efficiency and convenience. Another draw for watch experts is the under-$3,000 price tag. With the undying charm of old- world simplicity and a price tag that doesn't burn a hole in your wallet, this one virtually slides into your collection.

BT More Favourite

Maestro Moon Phases (2011), a stainless steel-finished mechanical wonder, features a sub-dial quietly mapping the phases of the moon.

gadgets

Top of the Tech

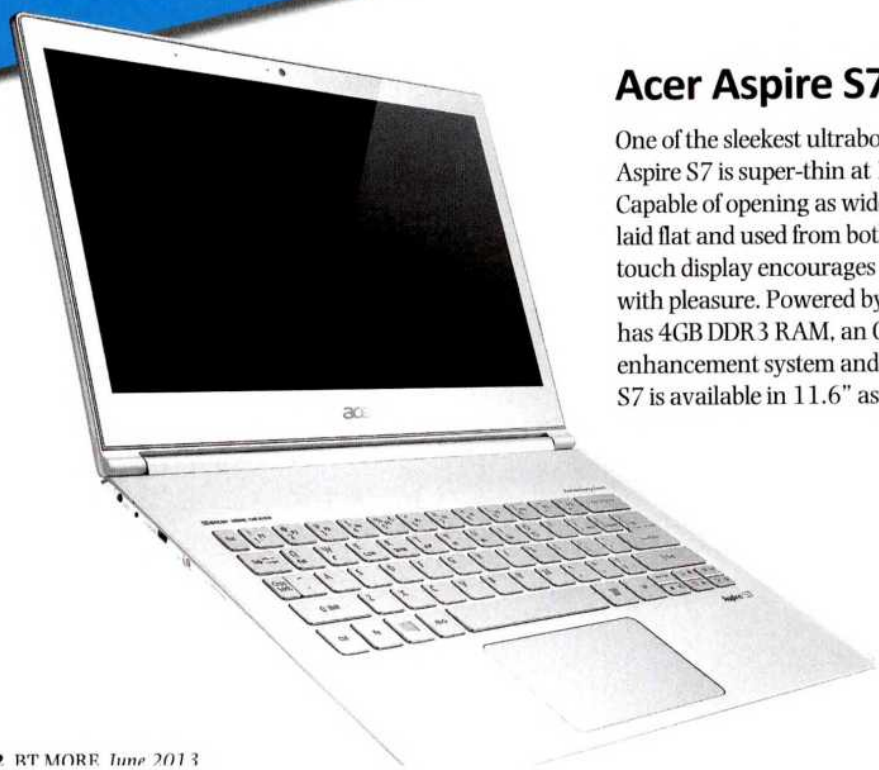
Searching for the exquisite in a world littered with new-age toys? Here are five iconic gadgets that can fetch you the coveted 'tech connoisseur' title.

Vertu Ti

Android's never had it this good! Vertu, the world's leading luxury mobile phone provider, has launched the Ti – an ice cream sandwich offering delivered in a titanium case that is strong, elegant and easy on the palm. Its 3.7-inch sapphire crystal screen is virtually scratch proof and promises to be four times stronger than other smart phones in terms of impact resistance. The Ti's Titanium case, on the other hand, makes it about five times stronger than its counterparts in the smartphone market. Solid and beautifully crafted, the phone combines distinctive Vertu design cues with a clean overall aesthetic that promises to draw the attention of every eyeball in the party.

SPECS

3.7-inch screen
Dual Core 1.7 GHz processor
64-GB internal memory
Price: ₹6.5 lakh-₹14 lakh



Acer Aspire S7

One of the sleekest ultrabooks in the market today, the 13.3" Aspire S7 is super-thin at 11.9 mm and ultra-light at 1.3 kg. Capable of opening as wide as 180 degrees, this ultrabook can be laid flat and used from both sides for terrific teamwork. Its full HD touch display encourages you to go social, combining business with pleasure. Powered by an Intel Core i5-3317U processor, it has 4GB DDR3 RAM, an Optimised Dolby Home Theater v4 audio enhancement system and up to six hours battery life. The Aspire S7 is available in 11.6" as well.

SPECS

13.3-inch screen
Intel Core i5-3317U processor
4GB DDR3 RAM
Price: ₹88,579

Dell XPS 12 Convertible

This one from Dell can be dubbed as the Caped Crusader of laptops. While it is capable of acting as an ultra-attractive notebook at meetings, it doubles up as an easy-to-handle tablet at other times. The reason for its flexibility is an elegant flip hinge touchscreen display that's designed to bring convenience to your fingertips, making the most of the Windows 8 operating system. Crafted out of machined aluminium and carbon fibre, it is safeguarded by ultra-tough Corning Gorilla Glass – making it nearly as rugged as its comic book counterpart. Dell XPS Convertibles with high-end configurations feature a Core i7-3517U processor, 8 GB RAM, and a 256 GB solid-state hard drive.

SPECS

Core i5 CPU
4 GB RAM
128 GB solid state drive
Price: Starts at ₹89,990

Wipro e.go Aero Ultra

Always on the move, but missing the powerhouse you need to keep track of your work? Maybe Wipro can help. Touted as an engineering marvel housed in a body of firm aluminium alloy, the e.go Aero Ultra is arguably the slimmest 14" ultrabook in the country. Weighing just 1.7 kg and packed with 4GB memory and a 500GB hard disk, it comes with an isolation keyboard and a large multi-gesture touch pad. It incorporates revolutionary Intel technologies – ensuring a state of permanent connectivity.

SPECS

1.7 kg in weight
4 GB memory
500 GB hard disk
Price: ₹39,900-₹49,000

The Tag Heuer Racer

After wowing the world with its very first dashboard and cockpit timer in 1911 and the iconic 12-hour chronograph in 1933, Tag Heuer has decided to make its presence felt in the 21st century with the Racer, a touchscreen smartphone entirely constructed from leading-edge motor racing and aviation materials. Powered by Android Gingerbread, the shock-proof smartphone's sporty yet timelessly elegant look is inspired by high-end GT cars.

SPECS

1 GHz processor
3.5-inch screen
Hi-def 5 MP auto focus camera
Price: ₹2 lakh

Of Smoke & Spirits

Exploring the hedonist's rush of liquor and cigars

Chivas 18 by Pininfarina

Can drinking and driving be used in the same sentence without somebody kicking up a fuss? Apparently yes, and that's what Chivas Regal 18 seems to have set out to prove. The whisky brand has tied up with Italian automotive design firm Pininfarina to showcase its fine blend of 20 rare Scottish single malts. Handcrafted at Pininfarina's workshop in Cambiano, Italy, the 18-year-old whisky's packaging is titled 'Drop', suggesting a sense of movement that is inherent to the automotive firm. However, the association really comes across through the metallic deep blue crestcase that mimics Pininfarina's swanky metalwork. Wood lies at the creative heart of both brands. Just as Pininfarina cars were traditionally built around wooden wireframes, known as mascherones, Chivas 18 is matured for eighteen years in oak barrels – giving the whisky its elegant golden hues and subtle flavours. To honour both brands, the interior is lined with a rich wood veneer. The spirit, comprising 85 flavours such as dried apricot and velvety dark chocolate, comes in two limited edition packs. While one is restricted to 1,500 pieces at $140, the other is available in 120 editions at $495 each. Connoisseurs can also order Pininfarina's showpiece, an eight-foot oak sculpture that can be used as a shelving unit for spirits. The firm has already recieved ten orders for this beauty that's being sold at $100,000. A regal choice, we say.

Limited Editions

The Glenlivet XXV
A Turner Duckworth repackaging with higher shoulders, a shorter neck and an enlarged base. ₹19,000

Finlandia Glacial Bottle
Webb Blevins's design uses glass refraction to mimic the melting of an iceberg. ₹1,500

Hennessy Limited Edition
New York's graffiti legend Futura has lent his art to 3.6 lakh numbered bottles. ₹4,000

Stock Up Your Humidor

San Lotano Oval

An unconventional rocket-like structure leaves this cigar with steady notes of leather, wood and dried cherry. Sporting a toothy Habano 2000 wrapper and breathing in rich Nicaraguan and Honduran long fillers, San Lotano Oval is destined to be called a holy smoke. Accentuating and binding the flavours is a secret filler that's known only to the folks at Tabacalera Fernandez, Nicaragua. Intrigued enough to pick this one up, eh?

Alec Bradley Black Market Filthy Hooligan

Despite its raw street name, the cigar is a gentle beauty. Wrapped in a silky light green band, the newly released limited edition gives out gentle smells of sweet grass, hay and a touch of earth when you initiate it with a straight cut. It offers the smoker cold draws, with peppery flavours fading into the backdrop. A full-bodied smoke with delicate but rich notes is what you get.

Montecristo, Double Edmundo

Officially announced at the 2013 Habanos Festival, the cigar's legacy is a tasting benchmark for other blends worldwide. With a ring gauge of 50 and a length of 155mm, the hand-rolled cigar has an easy grip and undergoes a slow and steady burning process. Believed to have a mild-to-strong taste, this makes for an hour-long smoke. This year's design has the new Montecristo band in a bigger size.

Espinosa Maduro

Wearing a beautiful, smoothly textured, dark chocolate Mexican Maduro wrapper, it surmises rich cocoa, cidar, pepper in its smokes and has a balanced spice base. This medium-full bodied cigar is crafted in Espinosa's La Zona factory in Esteli, Nicaragua and comes in four different vitolas: Robusto Box-Pressed (5×52), Belicoso Box-Pressed (5-1/2×52), Corona Gorda (5-5/8 x46), and Toro Box-Pressed (6-x52).

Wild Tobacco to Holy Smoke, in Four Steps

#1

Rolling

The flavours depend on how the tobacco is positioned in filler and binder leafs. Hand-rolled ones are the finest.

#2

Storing

The ideal temperature for a humidor is 64-70°F (18-21°C) as it maintains moisture and prevents worm attacks.

#3

Cutting

Insert the head of the cigar into the guillotine and cut into the cap, usually about 1/16 to 1/8 of an inch down.

#4

Lighting

Position the end of your cigar just above the flame. Keep puffing while turning it around gently.

The Limited Series LaFerrari

On March 5, the Geneva International Motor show played host to the world debut of the LaFerrari. The Prancing Horse's much-awaited limited series special is one amongst just 499 that will be built to represent an experiment with every technological solution. The introduction of the hybrid system has resulted in a solution that exalts Ferrari's fundamental values – performance and driving thrills. Known as HY-KERS, this hybrid technology combines maximum performance with minimal emissions, releasing just 330 g/km of CO2 without resorting to the electric-only drive. This is, however, a precursor to a fully electric version. Equipped with dynamic controls integrated for the first time ever on a Ferrari car with active aerodynamics and the HY-KERS system, the interiors feature an HMI inspired by F1 single-seaters.

Fast and Fabulous

Advocating cutting-edge technology and stylised design, BT More highlights the stalwarts of the auto industry. We celebrate six dynamic cars on our sixth anniversary.

The New Audi R8

The Audi R8 is a sports car that does not scrimp on luxury. While the exteriors have several eye-catching features such as a single-frame grille with tapered corners at the top, a redesigned diffuser and large round tailpipes, the re-structured all-LED headlights and rear-lights are standard with all models. The interiors are now even more upscale. With the optional honeycomb-quilted fine Nappa full-leather package, the seat covers and inserts in the door liners are quilted. This quilting is also available as an option for the Alcantara headlining.

Porsche 911 Series

Since its debut in 1963, the Porsche 911 has set a benchmark by building over 8,20,000 models – making it the most successful sports car series in the world. The central point of reference for all the other Porsche series, each model carries a piece of the 911 philosophy. The 991 – released in 2011 – was the greatest technical leap in the evolution of the 911 series. Raising performance and efficiency to new levels, it featured a completely new suspension with a longer wheelbase, wider track, larger tyres and ergonomically optimised interiors, making it a sportier albeit more comfortable driving experience . With its stretched silhouette, exciting contours and precisely designed details, the seventh generation of the Porsche 911 Carrera once again succeeded in redefining the standards for automobile design.

The SLS AMG By Mercedes-Benz

The purist design, intelligent lightweight construction and superior handling dynamics of the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG have exhilarated automotive enthusiasts across the world. The first independently developed vehicle by AMG in its illustrious 40-year-old history, this model demonstrates development expertise of the highest order. The innovative sports car exteriors, complemented by its aviation-inspired interiors, come together to form an exclusive piece of art with superior driving dynamics. Upholding the brand's core values of quality, safety, reliability and exclusivity, it is also the official F1 Safety Car.

Wooed With Elan

Elan at The Lodhi features elegantly plated and delicious fare. BY HITANI KAUR

REVERTING TO ITS ORIGINAL MONIKER, THE erstwhile Aman Hotel now has a spanking new identity as The Lodhi. While patrons might find it hard to keep up with the fluctuating ownership, the transition certainly has its perks; one of which is the property's restaurant and bar Elan, which plates up beautiful dishes from India, the Meditarranean and Asia amidst a sunny setting of cream and orange interiors.

While waiting to embark on a tasting menu from the international section, I opted for an Australian Shiraz from a very limited selection of red wines served by the glass while my companion stuck to whisky (try one of their rare aged malts at a cost). For appetisers, we began with a crisp potato crostini accompanied by a dollop of delectable cheesy mushroom. Next we shifted into high gear with steamed and fried sea bass smeared with peanut and samrose sauce, each offering a very distinct flavor, of which the samrose excited the palate with hot, tingly undertones. Our final starter was the pan-seared Canadian scallops, with a dab of tamarind sauce. The scallops were wonderfully soft, and tasted like the sea with the sharp tamarind slicing through. We closed the first course with a guava sorbet; a refreshing palate cleanser to prepare us for the mains ahead.

Pan-seared scallops, New Zealand lamb rack

Meal for two (alcohol extra)
₹3,000

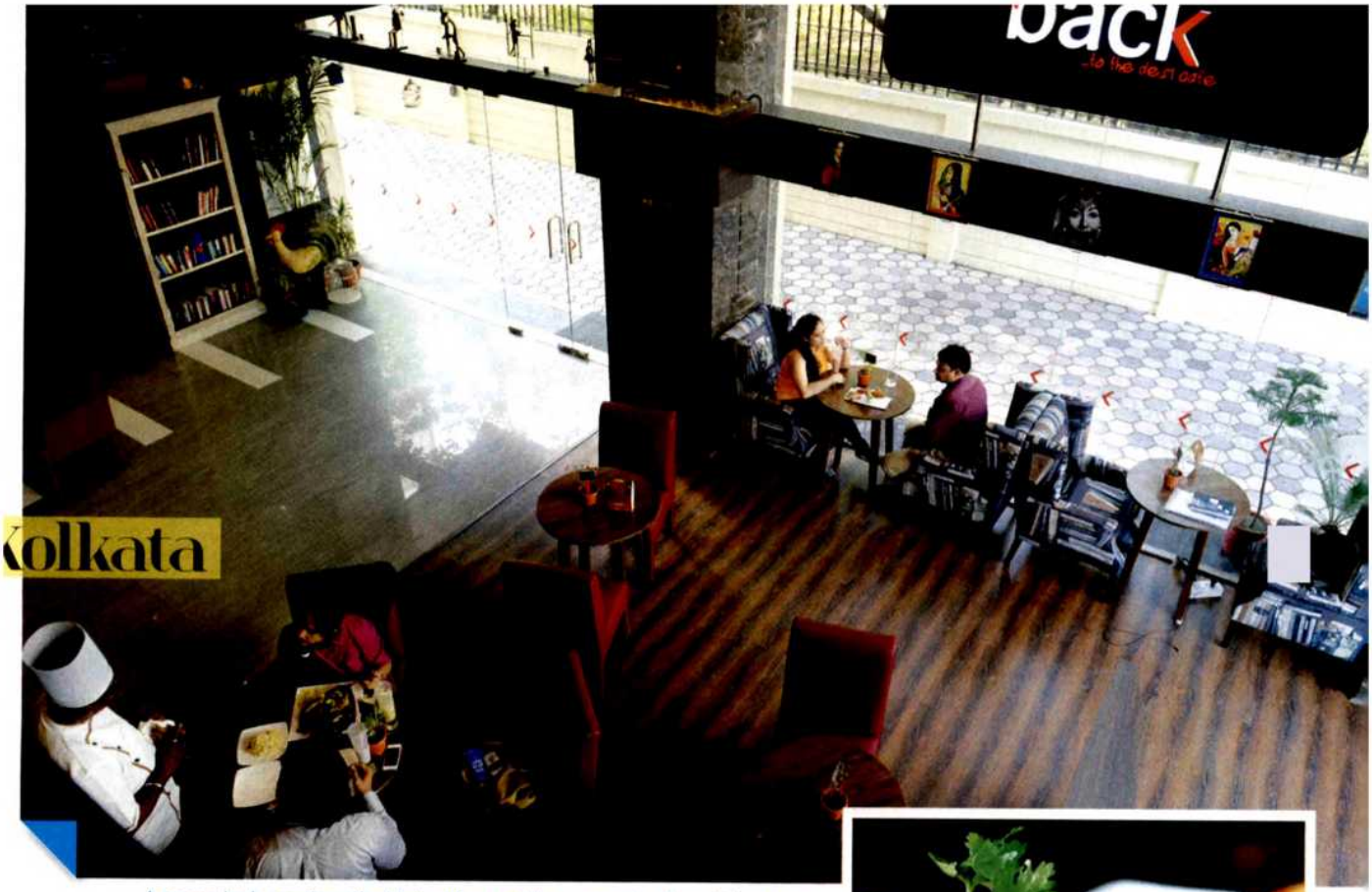
(011) 4363 3333

The New Zealand lamb rack was the highlight. Cooked to a perfect medium-rare, and by far the best lamb I have eaten to date. Each mouthful was warm and moist, contrary to my experience with lamb where you're left chewing the meat long after the accompaniments. We'd earlier asked the chef to limit the portions, but this one made us regret that decision. The crispy pork belly that followed didn't live up to the the lamb, even though our empty plates seemed to indicate otherwise. The dish lacked flavour, save for the beautifully golden-brown crust oozing fat and flavour, a calorific nightmare but a foodie's dream. In both presentation and taste, the chef's passion was evident on every plate.

For dessert we shifted outside to the cushioned comfort of the terrace and nursed our drinks while digging into a dark chocolate ganache cake and baked yoghurt with mango compote. The ganache was predictably delicious, but it was the mango compote that really wrapped up the meal with a swirl of sugar and tangy lightness. We left knowing our return was inevitable.

Delhi

The bright interiors at Elan at The Lodhi ▲



A roomy look, courtesy the high ceiling and the mezzanine floor dining area ▲
Every section in the menu features desi and continental variants ▶

Desi goes Overseas

Can't decide between Continental and Indian? Give Back... To the Desi Café a try. BY MALINI BANERJEE

IF YOU ARE TIRED OF HITTING THE SAME OLD joints in Sector V, Salt Lake, Kolkata, there's a hip new place to take your lunch break at. With over 200 IT companies dotting the area, it could be just the thing that techies in the vicinity have been wishing for.

As you enter Back...To the Desi Café, the first thing to catch your attention is the sense of space. The high ceiling with a mezzanine floor dining area in one corner gives the place a roomy look, and glass walls make for great natural lighting. Also dressing up the place are cute couches patterned with book spines and a bookshelf featuring a mish-mash of easy reads.

The menu is divided into Indian and continental subsections – a bit of a delightful khichdi. So, while the desi starters feature prawn koliwada and ajwaini aur peeli mirch ki kebab, the ones on the 'firangi' side include crispy cornflake prawns and sweet corn and cheese cigarillos. Now, we don't really know what's a peeli mirch, but the stuff brought to us on a platter consisted of dainty, well-flavoured fish kebab with wedges of lemon wrapped in a gauze. Vegetarians shouldn't miss out on the aloo ke tuk, dainty discs of aloo tikki with tangy sweet-and-spicy masala coating.

The restaurant takes the 'east-meets-west' theme a step further with 'nazzas', or naan pizzas. For example, the keema do piyaza nazza and chicken tikka nazza coexist on the same page as their continental counterparts like the four-cheese pizza, pepperoni and classic margherita. All pizzas can be converted into nazzas.

The main course is equally varied. B2D biryani and meat beliram find themselves on offer along with classics like pot roast lamb and lobster thermidor. The pasta course includes spaghetti carbonara, amatriciana with not-so-common options like fusilli bellaroma and penne with mushroom stroganoff sauce.

While the service was a little slow, especially on the drinks, it did not exactly make our patience run thin. All in all, not a bad destination for the foodie.

Peeli mirch ke kebab
Aloo ke tuk

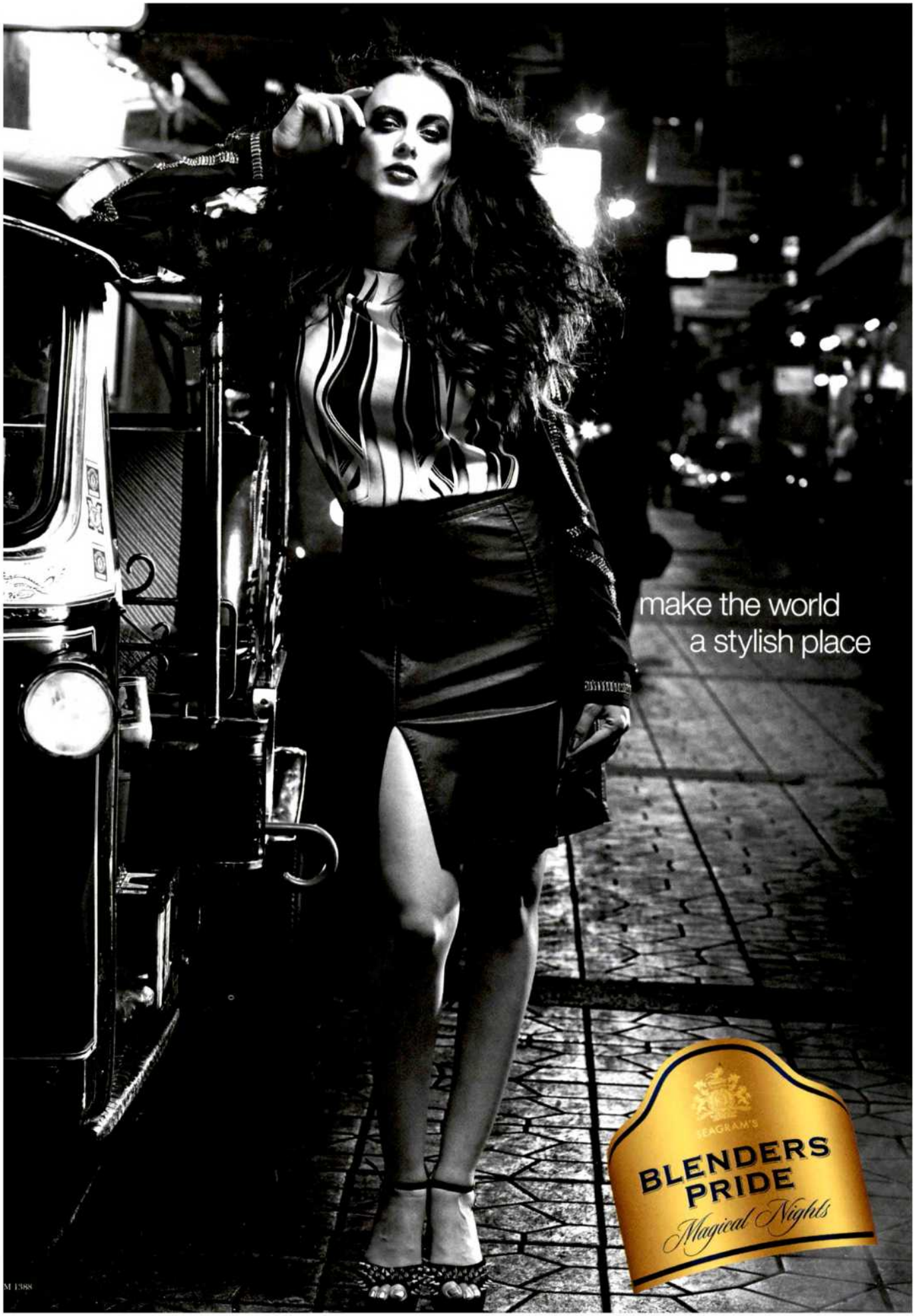
Meal for two
(alcohol extra)
₹1,200

(033) 23576444/45/46

splurge

Prague's Room with a View

WITH BAROQUE CUPOLAS, GOTHIC CHURCHES AND MEDIEVAL COBBLES, Prague's old-world glory has now scaled new heights. Visitors can experience the city through the Tower Park Praha, a one-room hotel that sits 70 m ahigh inside the city's only TV tower. Besides providing a 360-degree perspective of the city (of course), it has a tall television, cosy wooden interiors and a lavish bathtub. Book the place in advance for $1,300, and skip the tourist rush to bask in the city's glory someplace higher.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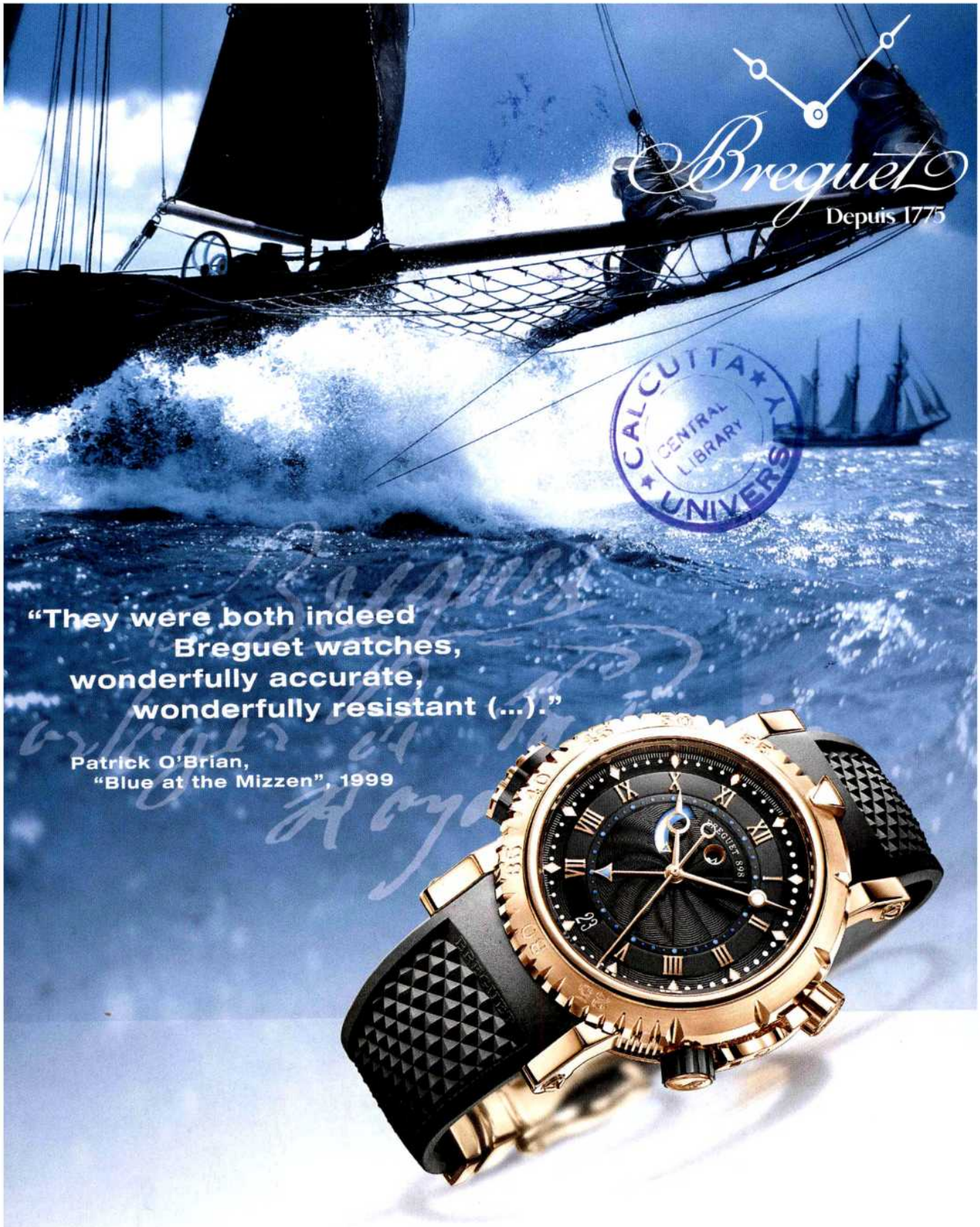

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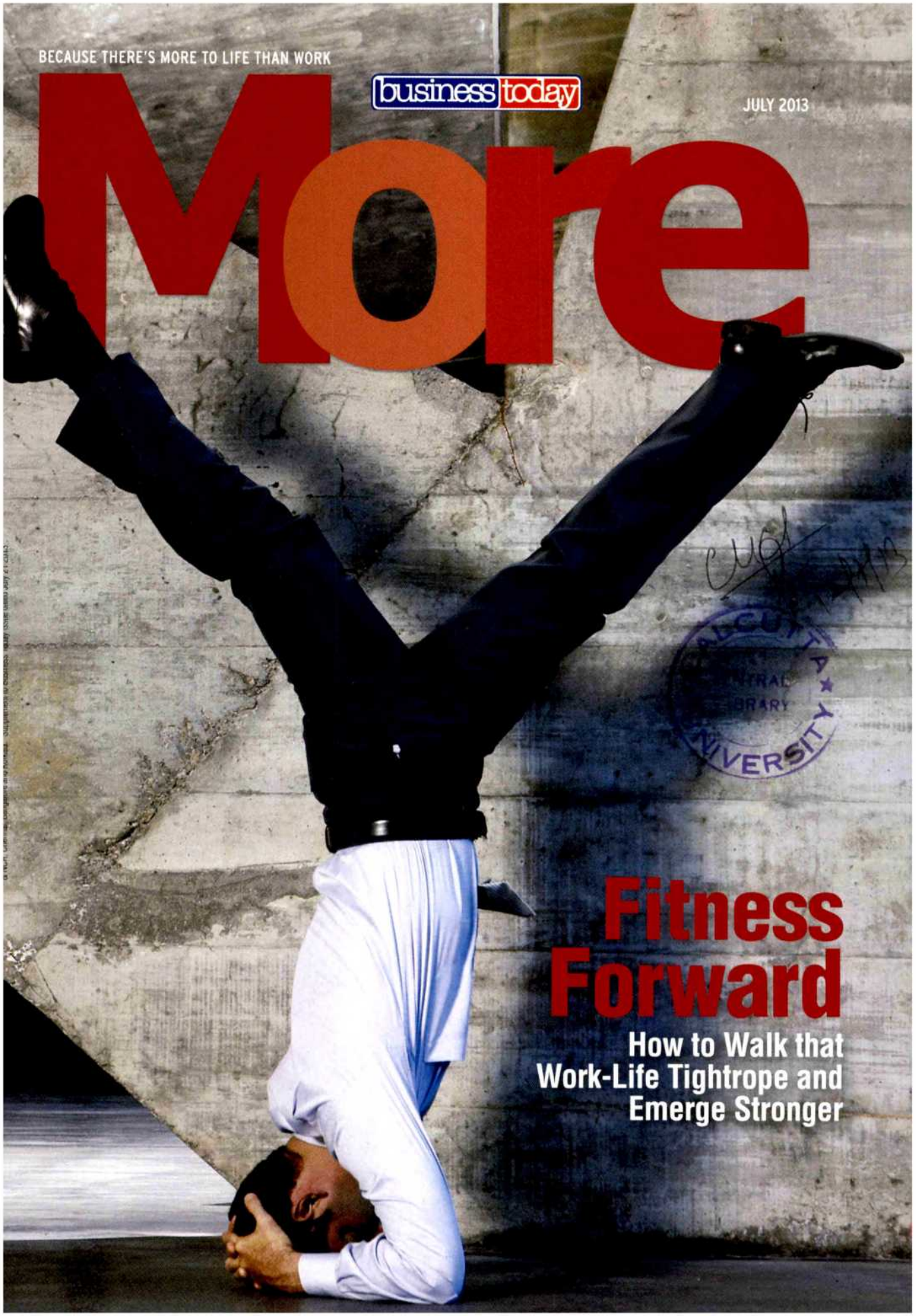
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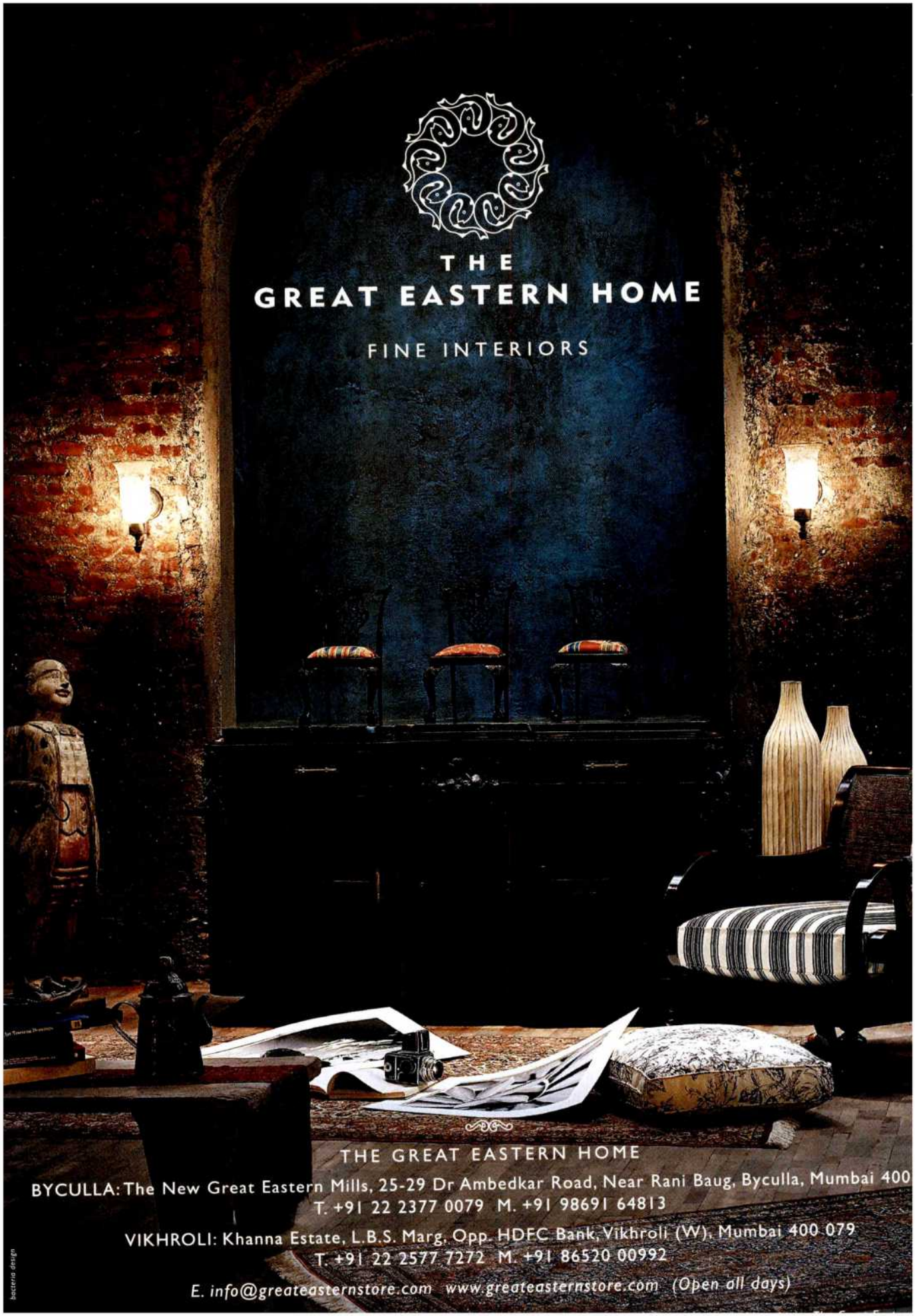
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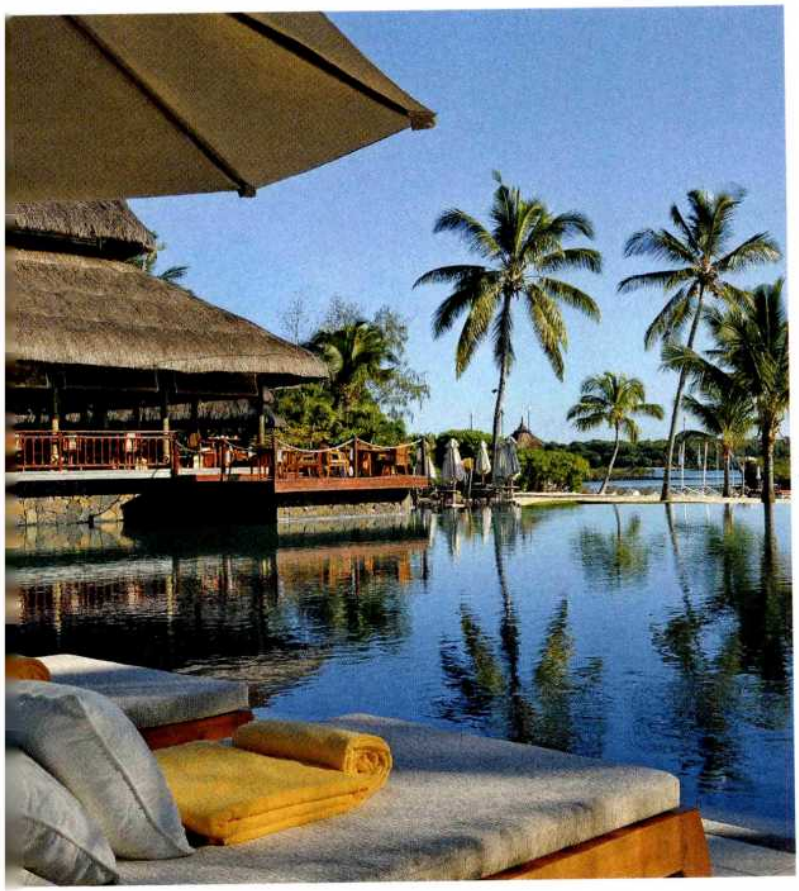

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Mauritius is best enjoyed at the Constance Le Prince Maurice

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ON THE COVER

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Man of Finesse

Through four simple steps, John Abraham takes the Indian urbane man to a whole new level of wellness and grooming.

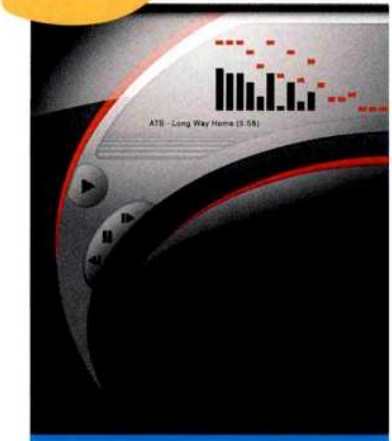
STEP 1# TOOL-BOX Men love their gadgets, but they also need gadgets that love them back! Figuring prominently in the list of three essential man tools is a good trimmer. The all-in-one Philips MPOWER is a trimmer, body groomer as well as a beard-styler. The other two gadgets comprise an electric toothbrush for hygiene and a treadmill for fitness.

STEP 2# VANITY FLAIR As the Indian sun scorches, sunscreen is a must at all times. The Tizo SPF 35 Pure Mineral Protection, even when used sparingly, works beautifully on Indian skin. If you are on a work trip, carry a moisturiser, a face wash and a shower gel of a similar fragrance. I am a believer in male pheromones – if I wear nothing and smell fine, that's good enough. If and when required, I wear Creed.

STEP 3# CLOSET SECRET It doesn't matter if the label says D&G or H&M, if you have the body, there's nothing else that matters. For a casual do, a t-shirt and a pair of withered jeans are good. For suits, one needs to pick up and understand the fabric by feel. The defining factor is finding the right cut. Be it an expensive designer tuxedo or an off-the-shelf dinner jacket, the cut is all that matters.

STEP 4# FIT THE BILL Fitness is a way of life, not a phase in life! One must run, but not mindlessly on the road – that's bad for the knees. Take to a soft-track or a treadmill and do cardios and interval training. Have an egg white and roughage-enriched breakfast, especially while you are travelling, that's fifty per cent of your daily nutrition.

5 desktop music players



Foobar2000
Customisable shortcut keys make it easier to manage music without taking your hands off the keyboard. Download add-ons and plug-ins to expand its features. App is Free

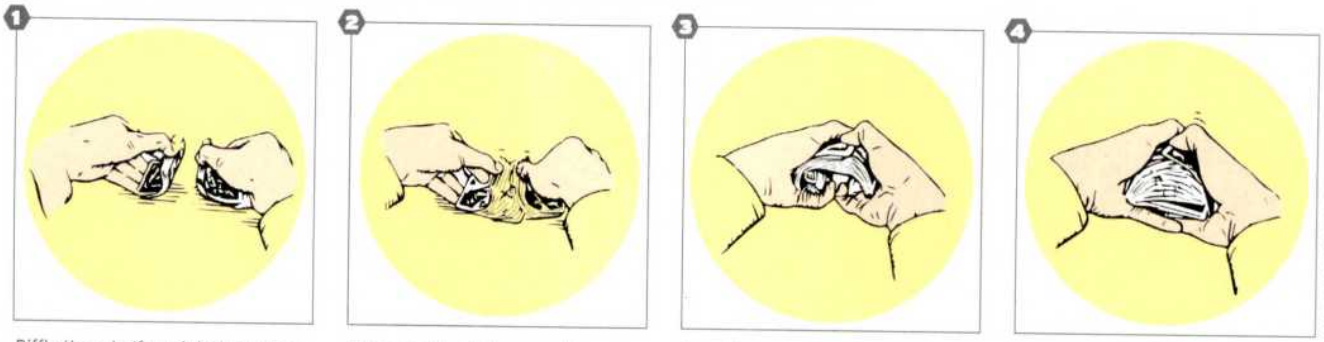
MediaMonkey
This portable device syncing tool rips CDs, manages podcasts, tags and renames album artwork. Price: $25 (gold version)

Winamp
The latest releases of this 15-year-old program lets you sync music with Android mobile devices. Featuring its own podcast and music directory, it lets you find new artistes and download music right through the app. Price: $20 (pro version)

iTunes
Combine with iCloud and iTunes Match for a powerful system that syncs, stacks and shuffles on the go. App is Free

MusicBee
Use the app to find duplicate tracks and tags. App is Free

On the Cards: How to Shuffle a Deck



1 Riffle them halfway into two stacks. Hold one stack in each hand. Pull back the top of the stacks with your thumbs, creating a small bend in the middle of the stack.

2 The next step is to move the thumbs slowly up to the top of the cards' edge, while releasing them one by one. The cards are now well shuffled for fair-play.

3 Exert the pressure with your thumbs, and wrap your thumbs index and middle fingers around the bottom edge. Now, slowly, bend the cards in an arch.

4 Uncurl your fingers and allow the cards to gradually cascade down. This technique will come in handy for testing any card-trick expert.

ILLUSTRATION: SACHIN RUHIL

Cooking With Wine

WHY STOP AT WINE PAIRING when you can pour it straight into your food? Here's a rookie's guide to cooking with wine:

CHOOSING THE WINE

The choice of wine depends on the desired flavour of the food. A wine rich in acids helps bring out the natural flavours of mild foods like pan-seared vegetables and seafood. The tannins present in red wine go well with hearty food like juicy steaks and grilled pork and beef. Also take into account the age of the wine – while a vintage wine will be drier, with few natural sugars and high alcohol content, a younger varietal contains natural sugar from the grapes.

TECHNIQUES TO TRY

Saute Wine adds moisture to veggies and fish, and doesn't interfere with their natural texture and sans the odour butter or oil. Take 10 per cent of the usual oil required and use half a cup of white wine to add flavour. Pour wine in the pan while the fish is simmering, then poach it as the wine boils. Alternatively, you can drizzle the fish with a tablespoon of wine and set to bake in a foil package.

Marinade Instead of using half a cup of oil, try quarter-cup oil and quarter-cup wine. This will help tenderise the meat and make it rich and toasty on the inside.

Bake Instead of adding a three-quarter cup of oil to a cake mix recipe, add a three-quarter cup of white or dessert wine to the batter. This helps lighten the cake and, well, makes it more addictive!

QUICK TIPS

Never cook with a wine you wouldn't drink; if you can't stand it as it is, you'll never like it in your food. Sip a little as you stir it, this helps you gauge the intensity and pungency of the liquor. The wines to stock up on your kitchen shelf are Port (rich sweetness), Sherry (nutty roasted), Madeira (toffee-caramel) and Marsala (fruity-citrusy). These are naturally intense and last the longest on the kitchen shelf.

DISCOVER A NEW MOMENT

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TAILORED TICKETS

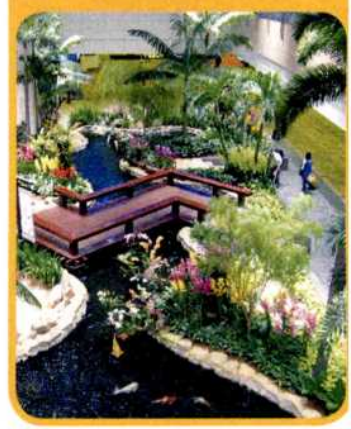
Frequent fliers will be subject to higher rates matching their spending power. The perks remain to be seen.

A new pricing system for frequent fliers might result in higher fares ▲

AT A MEETING LAST OCTOBER, THE International Air Transport Association agreed to a new standard that will allow airlines to ask customers checking out airfares – whether through agents or websites – to first provide details such as their name, frequent flier number, contact details and other information before quoting the ticket price. And while this new system claims to serve the needs of the customer better, it effectively allows airlines to charge travellers different prices for the same trip, in accordance with their booking history and spending power. On the plus side, this could mean more thoughtful packages for fliers, including perks like free checked baggage, aisle seats and other discounts. While basic fares allow customers their anonymity, an overall increase in these fares aims to discourage the trend. While regulators are yet to give this the go-ahead, they will probably accompany it with foolproof safeguards. It's a first step.

SINGAPORE SHINING

For the fourth time in 14 years, Singapore's Changi airport has been crowned the winner at the prestigious World Airport Awards in Geneva. Changi beat 395 airports across 39 services and products – including check-in, arrivals, transfers, shopping, security and immigration. The airport offers free Wi-Fi, free city tours to travellers on a stopover of five hours or more, and facilities such as an on-site swimming pool, butterfly garden, a nature trail and cinemas. Additionally, a codeshare agreement between Singapore Airlines and Virgin America entitles members of the Singapore Airlines' frequent flier programme to earn miles when they fly Virgin America. Now, there's a winner!



PUFF LIKE AN EMIR

Passengers flying Emirate Airlines will be exempt from the universal no-smoking policy with the debut of the airline's Shisha Lounge. Offered on select jumbo jets, this spiffy new service – open to both business and first-class passengers – will first appear on the Airbus A380. The new service will allow fliers to pre-order their hookah from the onboard menu and proceed to the lounge for the Middle-East's version of the post-dinner cigar. The aim is to enrich their flying experience and familiarise foreigners to Arabic customs before they touch down.

TURKISH TREAT

The Turkish Government recently launched an online visa system, replacing the stamp-type visa with a quick e-visa. The initiative will let tourists from 94 countries (including India) obtain visas in a matter of minutes as long as they are travelling for tourism or commerce. So, next time, just log on to www.evisa.gov.tr, make the online payment, download your visa, and you're good to go.

GOING ONCE, GOING TWICE

While free upgrades have been the domain of the well-networked and occasionally lucky traveller, a new blind bidding might be just your ticket from cattle class to business class. In a strategic move to entice the economy traveller, global airlines – including Air New Zealand, Brussels Airlines, Copa Airlines, Czech Airlines, El Al, Etihad, TAP Portugal, Virgin Atlantic, Austrian Airlines and Air Mauritius – have cashed in on it. Developed

Bid your way to the first class cabin ▲

by U.S. software firm Plusgrade, this business model has been designed for airlines hoping to generate extra revenue by utilising empty expensive seats. The bidding, however, will not act as a deterrent for business class fliers, who have the advantage of assured comfort as opposed to getting lucky. Passengers buying tickets are invited to bid for an upgrade by the airline, and are informed up to 48 hours before take-off if they've won. If not, you fly as is, without the additional charge. It's a win-win, why not give it a shot?

FOOD ON THE GO

The biggest drawback of frequent travel is the toll it takes on your health. The next time you jet out for work or play, stock up on these easily available powerfoods that will keep you looking fit and feeling fine. Pick fruits like grapes, apples or bananas that don't need to be cut. Greek yoghurt packs in protein and very little fat, and is perfect for a breakfast on the run; puffed grains and nuts are a good substitute for chips; and mini cheeses are perfect to throw into your bag for a midday boost. When you don't have access to fresh stock, pick up a packet of freeze-dried veggies; and to satiate nocturnal munchies, a bag of corn is light yet wholesome, and will keep you full for hours.

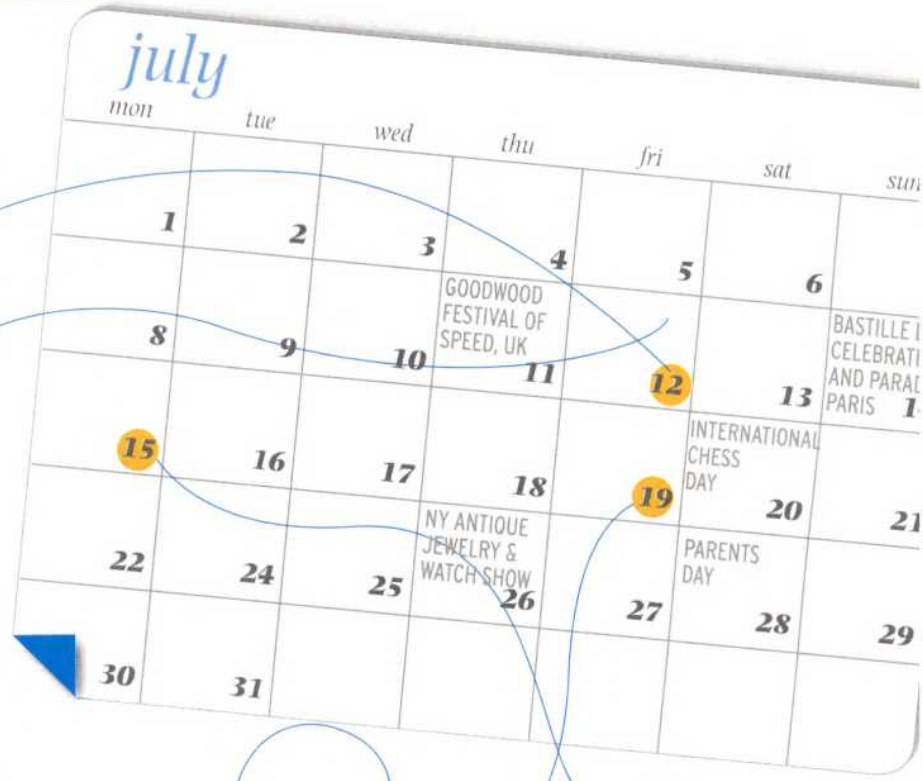
APP CORNER

Onavo Protect

Free (iOS 5.0 or higher)
By Onavo Mobile Ltd.

Millions of users across the world use Onavo's mobile apps to take the worry out of smartphone and tablet usage. Onavo's previous apps have helped save data consumption and, this time around, the app addresses security by promising to protect users from phishers as well as malicious and non-secure mobile websites.

speed dates



12-21 July

FESTIVAL DEL SOLE, NAPA VALLEY, SAN FRANCISCO

World-class music, dance and theatre team up with one-of-a-kind lifestyle programmes and Napa's incomparable wines to culminate in California's Festival del Sole. The region's beauty forms the backdrop for breathtaking performances, intimate Vintner's luncheons, exquisite wine-tasting events and dinners, admission-free community concerts and rejuvenating wellness

activities. For tickets and more information, log on to http://festivaldelsole.org.

12-14 June

T IN THE PARK, SCOTLAND

With seven main stages and large camping areas, the 20th edition of this much-awaited summer music festival in Scotland will offer a huge variety of music for as many as 85,000 music aficionados. Other attractions comprise comedy tents, silent discos, food markets and stalls. The artiste line-up: Mumford & Sons, Rihanna, The Killers, Snoop Dogg, My Bloody Valentine and Ke$ha. For gig tickets, visit http://www.tinthepark.com/tickets.

19-24 July

MELBOURNE CABARET FESTIVAL

The second edition of this annual festival in Melbourne, Australia, features the very best of cabaret's various faces: comedic, musical, dark, edgy and queer. The stellar line-up this year comprises more than 100 performers in 36 shows across South Melbourne's Emerald Hill arts and cultural area. For festival details and tickets, visit melbournecabaret.com

15-22 July

SINGAPORE FOOD FESTIVAL

The annual gourmet festival showcases the best of food and wine that the country ha to offer. Become a part of this event, which has become a re letter day in the Singaporean calendar, and get hooked to a sea of flavours originating from the country's culinary heritage - best tasted in the month of July. For more info, visit https://www.savour.sg/.

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Foods at War

Did you know that an apple a day may actually bring the doctor to your doorstep if eaten right after a meal? A list of common foods that don't complement each other.

Having cereal with acidic fruit juices could prove incompatible on your palate

Cereal and orange juice

The acids in orange juice destroy the enzyme that helps digest starches present in cereal. Also, acidic fruits or juices can curdle milk, turning it into a heavy mucus-like substance.

Melons and milk

Ayurveda states that while milk acts as a laxative, melons have diuretic properties – resulting in a clash of functions. Moreover, the stomach acids required to digest the melon make the milk curdle, causing gastric issues.

Fruits after meals

As fruits contain simple sugars that require no digestion, they do not stay long in the stomach – unlike other foods that are rich in fat, protein and starch. However, if you eat fruits after meals, the sugar therein is likely to sit in the stomach and ferment rather than get digested instantly.

Beans and cheese

Now, this is something you should keep in mind before ente ing a Mexican restaurant. When dairy cheese and beans ar eaten with a hearty serving of guacamole and hot sauce, it almost guaranteed to cause gas and bloating. Potent!

Ghee and honey

According to the precepts of ayurveda, it's a bad idea to con bine equal quantities of ghee and honey (by weight). Why While ghee has cooling properties, honey generates heat – gi ing rise to starkly opposite reactions in your body.

Tomato and cheese pasta sauce

Tomatoes, which are considered acidic, do not mix well wit starchy carbs such as pasta. This already-cumbersome comb turns into a recipe for digestive problems when you add dair to it. So, try pasta with grilled veggies instead.

Rainy Day Foods

Monsoon's coming, so watch what you eat! Here are some do's and don'ts for the season.

Do's

Tea off

You may really feel like cozying up to a glass of whisky on a rainy day, but give tea a chance instead. To keep bouts of influenza away, try herbal ones – especially those made of ginger or lemon.

Soup up

During the monsoon, soups are a good way of getting nutrition from vegetables without consuming any harmful bacteria in the process. And what's more, you can experiment with various veggie combinations too!

Cereal solution

Make the most of "dry" foods, including cereals like corn, chickpea and oats, as they provide you with all the vital nutrition you may need. It's best to avoid watery meals such as curried rice because they may cause bloating.

Don'ts

Raw deal

Given the rising humidity and the prevalence of various germs and bacteria in the air, monsoon is the time to avoid raw vegetables and fruits. Eating raw or semi-cooked food could result in ailments such as jaundice and typhoid.

No juice

Try to avoid drinking vegetable and fruit juice during this period, especially from roadside stalls that probably use unfiltered water. Even if you prepare the juice at home, drink it immediately.

Fish! This isn't good

While sea food should essentially be avoided, exercise even more caution with prawns and fish because monsoon is their breeding season. If you can't live without having fish, make doubly sure that it is fresh.

Bowflex SelectTech 552

IMAGINE HAVING 30 DUMBBELLS IN ONE! WITH THE turn of a dial on the Bowflex SelectTech 552 dumbbells, you can change its weight all the way from 5 lbs to 52.5 lbs. This way, a single piece of exercise equipment can replace dozens of dumbbells cluttering up your workout space. What's more, its futuristic design promises to give your best-looking dumbbell a run for its money!

Price: Rs 20,411

From Men's Health

NAIL THE SINGLE-ARM PUSHUP

Learn to conquer one of the world's most awe-inspiring gym feats–the single-arm pushup–by following this strength and coordination plan from Zach Even-Esh, owner of Underground Strength Gym in Edison, New Jersey.

STEP 1

▲ CHISEL YOUR CHEST

Four days a week, wear a heavy backpack and do pushups. Next, do offset pushups, with one hand on the floor and the other on a small box. Ditch the box and do close-hands pushups to failure. Rest. Do 5 sets of each.

STEP 3

▲ PUSH IT!

Spread your feet wide. Place one hand on the floor under your shoulder and the other hand by your butt. Lower yourself to the floor, turning your elbow. As you reach the ground, push yourself back up.

STEP 2

▲ BUILD BALANCE

Static holds improve core strength. Assume a pushup position with your feet twice shoulder-width apart. Raise one hand and place it below your butt; hold for at least 15 seconds.

STEP 4

▲ MAKE IT LOOK EASY

Ugly first attempt? Practise several times a day, four days a week, to increase your strength, stability, and muscle memory.

Enter Sandman

Counting on pills to get you through sleepless nights? Hold your horses, there are alternatives

TEXT BY JIMMY JACOB

YOU COUNT THE FIRST SHEEP, THEN the second, and by the time you get to the twelve thousandth, you are still no closer to dreamland than when you hit the pillow four hours ago. In the midst of all this, you have tossed and turned a million times, and more tragically, the idyllic pastural settings you painstakingly created in your mind's eye keep getting replaced by that nightmare of a worksheet from the previous day in office.

And as you herd away the woolly beasts in acknowledgment of complete defeat, you know exactly what's going to happen at work a couple of hours later. Bleary eyes, low concentration, irritability, exhaustion, missed deadlines and admonitions from superiors – the pink slip is probably just a week away.

The Sandman is no friend of yours.

Insomnia is the inability to achieve a certain kind of sleep – measured in terms of hours as well as quality – that would enable a person to wake up feeling rested and refreshed. Divyan George Varghese, a counsellor based in Chennai, says: "There are plenty of causes for insomnia. Most of them seem to be medical or physical -- like hormones, stimulants like coffee, nicotine and drugs. Stress and anxiety caused due to pressures at the workplace are, in fact, a huge cause of insomnia."

Insomnia affects thousands of professionals across India every year, and mostly, the visit to a specialist takes a while coming. Many initially try to tackle the sleep disorder on their own terms – even taking to narcotics or alcohol in a desperate attempt to catch their share of forty winks. A safer yet more effective route, however, lies in making a few changes in your lifestyle.

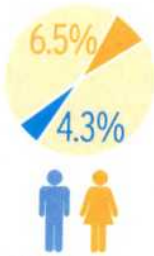
STILL AWAKE AT 4 AM?

In India...

1/20

According to a study conducted by the Warwick Medical School in 2012, one among every 20 Indians suffers from insomnia.

He v/s She



When it comes to disturbed sleep, Indian women (at 6.5 per cent) outnumber men (4.3 per cent).

The Causes

Approximately 4 per cent Indian men who reported severe nocturnal sleep problems suffered from severe depression, while 3 per cent reported severe anxiety.

World Count

16%

The survey also suggested that 16 per cent of the population suffers from insomnia in the countries surveyed (Ghana, Tanzania, South Africa, India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Indonesia and Kenya).

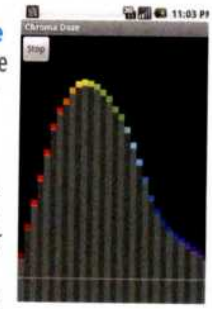
Sleep like a baby droid

The party animal next door and the recent run-in with your snappy boss keeping you awake through the night? Give these sleep-inducing Android apps a try.

Lightning Bug - Sleep Clock

A hot favourite on Google Play, this app lulls you to sleep through nearly 200 exclusive samples of relaxing sounds and white noise soundtracks. What's more, it even mixes them for a different experience every night

Chroma Doze



You don't have to be a DJ for this one. Instead of music mixing, you just have to sketch your favourite spectrum and listen to the generated stream of coloured and white noise. The sounds it generates are based on Fourier Analysis Algorithms, which are proven to have soothing qualities.

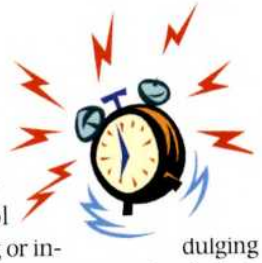
Rain Effect Makes Deep Sleep

Corny name, sure, but have you noticed how much easier it is to sleep when it is raining? This app – with a rating of four stars – works on the same concept and Android users have given it the thumbs up. This app has the sounds of thunder, rain and drops pattering gently onto the ground.

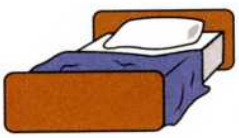
The ayurvedic route to better sleep

- **Sirodhara** is a rejuvenating ayurvedic therapy that is specifically designed to eliminate mental exhaustion and toxins, thereby curing insomnia. It involves pouring oil or milk on the patient's forehead from a distance for a specific time period.
- Using essential oils like **Lavender, Neroli, Sandalwood, Sweet Marjoram** and **Petitgrain** as part of aromatherapy treatments also has a direct physiological and psychological effect, leading to relaxation and better sleep patterns.
- Ayurvedic herbs used for curing insomnia include the **Indian sorrel, rauwolfia, aniseed, ashwagandha, brahmi, jatamansi, lemon balm, passion flower** and **chamomile.**
- Other therapies such as **abhyanga** and **siroabhyanga** help alleviate stress levels, reducing insomnia triggers.

SCHEDULE YOUR SLEEP



Start by sticking to a regular sleep schedule and avoid unwanted naps during your free time, tempting as they may seem. If possible, avoid doing anything stressful or excitabl such as playing video games, arguing or indulging in vigorous exercise – for at least an hour before you hit the bed. And yes, that *Evil Dead* DVD had better remain in its rack.



BEDROOM'S FOR SLEEP. PERIOD

Sleep will never be a friend to you if it finds your bedroom uninviting. So, if your room has flashing lights or heavy metal blaring through 10,000-watt sound boxes round the clock, don't be too surprised if you are dogged by insomnia. Ensure that your bedroom is sufficiently dark when it's time for bed, and has all the equipment required for keeping the temperature at comfortable levels. More importantly, fight the urge to lug your television or Playstation in – it is important that your body starts identifying the bedroom as a sleep-only zone.

SILENCE PLEASE

Along with the Playstation and the television, try to keep noise out of the bedroom too. Now, it is not possible for everybody to sound-proof their bedrooms, and barking dogs, loud neighbours and vehicles cannot be silenced. So, alternatively, try masking the sounds with a fan, recordings of soothing sounds, or white noise. You can buy a sound machine or generate your own white noise by setting your radio between stations. Earplugs may also help.

SKIP THE COFFEE AND NIGHTCAPS

Coffee, being a stimulant, is certainly not a great bedtime drink. While alcoholic drinks may help you drift off, they affect the quality of sleep and – very often – make you snooze through the morning alarm. What's more the people at office wouldn't appreciate alcohol on your breath either. You could, however, try milk. Whether it's the tryptophan it contains, or just the fact that it is identified as a bedtime drink, milk is something that helps send you down the road to dreamland. But if you are feeling too grown-up for that, try your hand at warm water infused with lemon wedges, ginger and honey instead.

THERAPY, YOGA AND MEDITATION

Yoga and meditation could be indirectly beneficial for people suffering from stress-induced insomnia. "Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is the best way to handle insomnia that's not caused by medical ailments. Yoga, meditation and relaxation exercises may help too, though I feel they deal more with stress and anxiety than the sleep disorder itself. But insomnia could disappear once the stress and anxiety are taken care of," says Varghese.

THE LAST RESORT

However, if these techniques do not help, a visit to the neighbourhood shrink would be in order. "Insomnia is not something that should be ignored," says the counsellor. "The complications arising from this disorder can be physical as well as mental. The brain will not function normally if it does not get enough rest. Sometimes, it even leads to mental instability."

Gardens by the Bay

Indulgence & Enjoyment for the entire family

A luxurious holiday awaits in Singapore

Family at Elephant feeding

Sands SkyPark

Looking for a holiday that you and all in your family can enjoy? One that plays to the passions and interests of the members? Singapore, with its innumerable attractions, makes for the perfect destination for indulging in fabulous family fun.

The spectacular Marina Bay Sands offers world class luxury accommodation and a 150-metre Infinity Pool at the Sands SkyPark® for the family that loves to live it up in style. Indulge in contemporary luxury and refined elegance at The Fullerton Bay Hotel; seated on Marina Bay's prime waterfront with a magnificent view of the skyline.

Pamper your taste buds at celebrated Chef Joël Robuchon's culinary heaven L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon. For a parents evening out, Tippling Club is an invigorating experience that cannot be missed.

At Gardens by the Bay, the whole family can marvel at the stunning city skyline from atop a 50m tall Supertree Grove. Relive some of your all-time favourite movies together with your children in a world of thrilling state-of-the-art rides like TRANSFORMERS The Ride at Southeast Asia's Universal Studios Singapore® theme park.

The Paragon Shopping Centre and Forum The Shopping Mall, have a wide selection of kid's fashion and toys including Armani Kids, Guess Kids, Petit Bateau and Toys 'R' Us.

For your very own customized family fun indulgence Singapore holiday, log on to www.yoursingapore.com

The Lalit Golf and Spa Resort Goa

Located along the western coast of India, The Lalit Golf & Spa Resort Goa is a luxurious five star deluxe all suite resort property built on 85 acres of land and offers a breathtaking view of the Arabian Sea with a unique confluence of the Talpone River & it's tributary, cradled by the majestic Sahyadari range and a kilometer long exclusive beachfront. Located in South Goa, we are one of the most exquisite, beautiful and secluded Goan beach resorts with 255 suites offered.

The Baroque-Portuguese style architecture with an elegant blend of Goan culture all nestled amidst formally landscaped themed gardens, a 9-hole 36-par International Links golf course and a multitude of hotel facilities ranging from modern meeting rooms to a trendy bar and various dining avenues, from beach activities to a holistic spa; and from water activities to sports facilities. The Lalit Golf & Spa Resort Goa offers six dining outlets with live open kitchens in 'Canacona', 'The Sea bq', 'Sirocco' and 'Corta's' providing all popular cuisines as well as seafood to cater to all types of palates. The resort has a Helipad to facilitate the experience of life in the air and on earth.

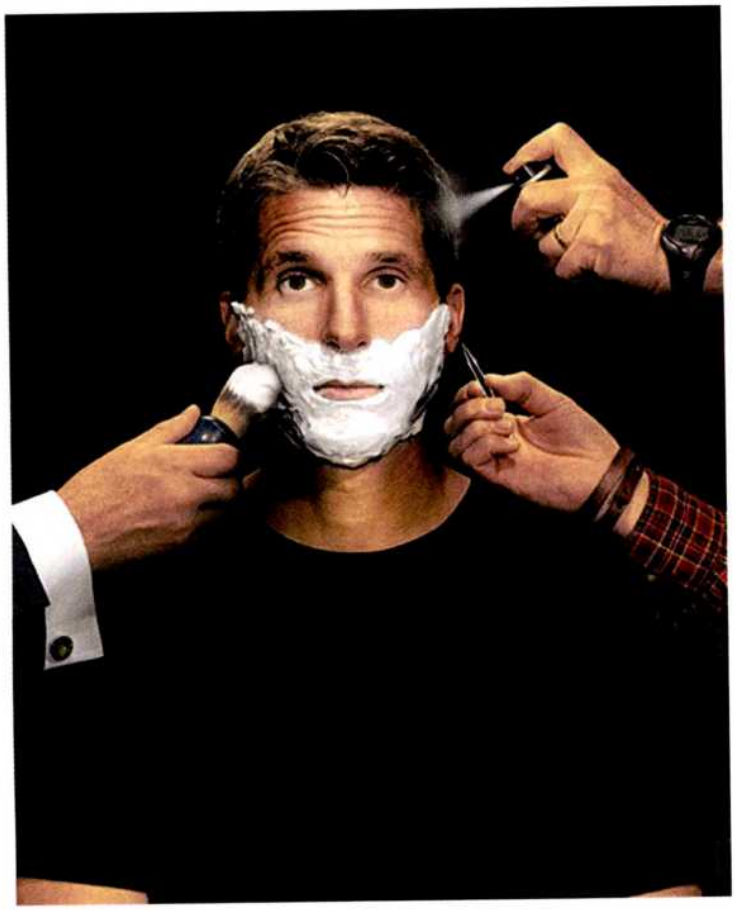
Also on offer is private luxury living with its ten luxury villas - an ideal hideout place with the comfort of home, away from home. The resort offers seven banquet halls and meeting rooms, ideal for all types of corporate events, weddings ceremonies and more. The resort boasts of being the perfect place for relaxation & rejuvenation.

MIRROR MIRROR

Even as the summer sun gives way to some rain, it's easy to feel exhausted and wilted thanks to the weather. Follow our six simple-yet-effective commandments to stay cool, crisp and stylish.

TEXT BY HITANI KAUR

TO MAKE A GOOD IMPRESSION, FIRST OR OTHERWISE, it's important for a number of elements to come together seamlessly. From the neatness of your shave and the cut of your clothes to the shine on your shoe, every little thing is a dead give-away that speaks volumes about your sense of style. With all the things you can do today, it's confusing to know which ones you should. Follow our lead for a grooming regime to look and feel your very best this season.



1 FIT IS HIT

They say men are like wine – growing finer with each passing year. But there's a reason why men like George Clooney and Clint Eastwood continue to rock the red carpet; it all boils down to the lifestyle they lead. Live right, eat right and sleep right – that's half the battle won. Eat regular and balanced meals and pack in your share of physical exercise. Binge only occasionally, if at all, and you'll see the results in the long run. Aim for variety by substituting your gym membership with activities like biking, climbing, swimming and team sports, it'll keep you fit without getting monotonous. This will form the very foundation of your appearance and pay off in the long run.

2 FACE OFF

Moving on to the seemingly superficial aspects of your look, start right at the top with a well-kept face. There are a few rituals that you can carry out consistently – they're

quick and easy but can really set your look apart. For starters, trim your nose hair, pluck the excess hair from below your eyebrows (just tweeze off the stray strands, don't go as far as shaping) and shave the growth off your ears and neck. This, in itself, will have you looking immaculate. Next, go in for a close shave. Make sure that you shave in the same direction as your growth to ensure that there is no ingrowth, and don't wait for a day's stubble; shaving on a daily basis gives you a consistent freshness. If you have a beard, get rid of it, this season's all about looking cool and clean. Alternatively, if you're a beard man, keep it neatly trimmed and devoid of stray hairs sticking out. Wrap up with a light aftershave and moisturise to seal the deal.

STANDING TALL 3

This might come across as frivolous, it might even sound like the nagging voice of your mother, but the importance of good posture cannot be stressed enough. After working your look from top to toe, don't blunder at this last stage. Standing tall is more about posture than height. A straight back with your head held up straight not only gives you the illusion of height, it also endows you with an edge that screams confidence. And don't forget to finish off with a firm handshake.

4 FINGERS & TOES

One of the first things that women notice in a man, even before his shoes, is his hands. A lot of people will tell you to go for a monthly manicure and ask you to buff your nails to get them shining, but you needn't even go that far. It's pretty straightforward – cut your nails regularly and keep your hands clean. As for your feet, use a pumice stone to rub your heels and you're fine. Yes, it's that simple.

WHIFF OF MACHISMO 5

You've got to smell as good as you look. Opt for a citrusy scent for the day and go heavy with a masculine musk for the night. We'd recommend Eros by Versace; a heady mix of mint oil, lemon, apple and geranium. Creating a fresh yet woody combination, it's intoxicating in a subtle way. This time of year, your fragrance diffuses more rapidly because of the moisture and heat in the air. So be sure to use just the right amount, spray on enough to add a whiff to the air, but don't go overboard and douse yourself. Pick one or two that work on your skin and stick with them. Maintaining a consistent scent works better than a cacophony of different ones.

TAILORMADE 6

There's a reason why 'custom-made' is generously sprinkled into the wardrobes of the discerning dresser. It's time you ditched the notion that fitted clothes are exclusive to the lady. Regardless of your shape and size, a well-tailored suit, pants or even a shirt can transform your silhouette. Pay attention to where your shoulders end. Your shirt and blazer should never droop lower onto your arm; it makes you look sloppy. When it comes to trousers, length is critical. There's a fine line between too short and too long; tread lightly to get it just right.

wellness

Finding Nirvana

Trying to walk the work-life tightrope in the midst of your busy routine? Take some time out to check our list of some of India's holistic wellness retreats.

TEXT BY ANUSHREE BASU-BHALLA

Osho Meditation Centre, Pune

Multidisciplinary meditation

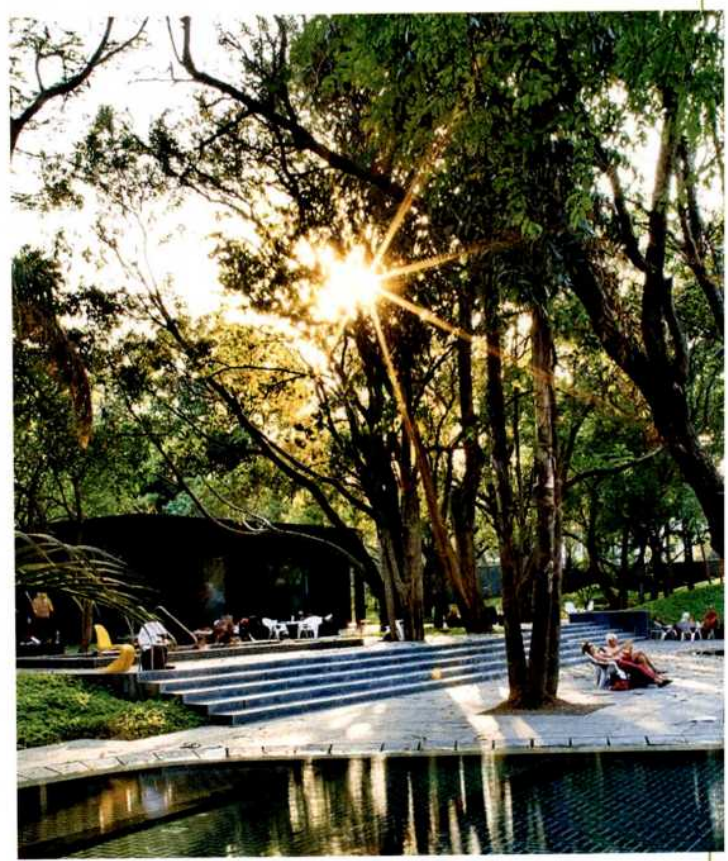
His name is synonymous with new-age spirituality catchphrases such as 'totality', 'awareness', and 'conscious living'. Once known as Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, academic and philosopher Osho is the quintessential Indian guru who entranced the Western world during the 70s with his ground-breaking and radical ideologies about religion and society. His teachings, albeit controversial, live on even two decades after his death, and are a compelling upgrade on the work and spiritual systems of precending mystics. The Osho Meditation Centre is one of the biggest facilities dedicated to meditation and spirituality in India. Its proximity to Mumbai means that even a quiet and introspective weekend here helps you reconnect with yourself after the din of a busy week. Owing to the unconventional teaching that it imparts – think, tantric sex – the Centre is also touted as a 'Spiritual Disneyland'. Every year, around 200,000 visitors enroll for the Centre's programme on spiritual enlightening. Apart from a few rules regarding dress, general decorum and attitude, there's nothing of the monastic lifestyle that one might associate with ashram life. As the ashram endorses a relaxed lifestyle, there are relaxation facilities, cafes, health clubs and a huge pool dotting the 28-acre campus premises. The meditation classes cover all major schools of spirituality, and touch upon yoga, zen, Taoism, tantra, and even Sufism.

Getting There

The centre is located at the upscale Koregaon Park in the heart of Pune, located approximately 6 km from the city's international airport. The centre also arranges door-to-door pick up service from Mumbai, for a fee.

Bookings

The upscale rooms at the Osho Guesthouse start at ₹12,000 per night on twin sharing (taxes extra; till October 31). Pre-booking at reservations @osho.com is advised.



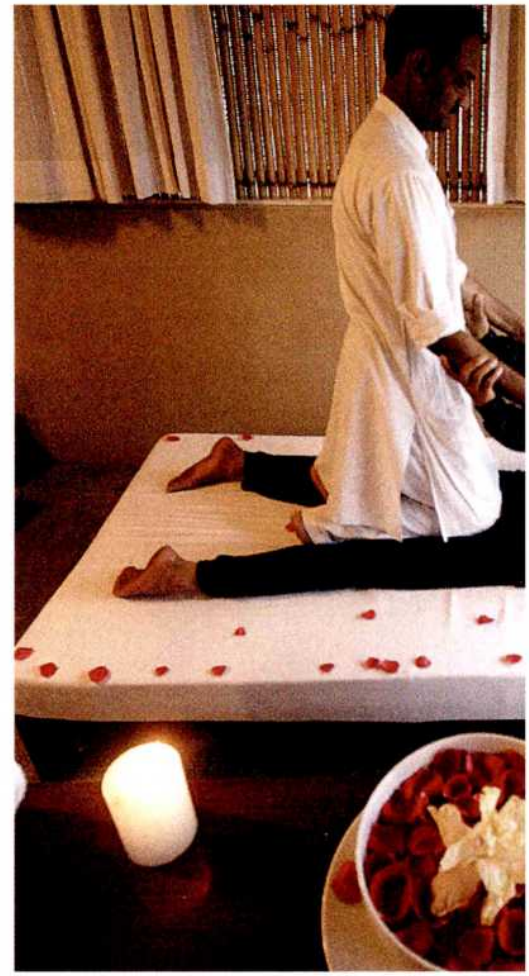
Kalari Kovilakom, Kerala

Ayurveda

Can there be a royal road to deep healing? A stay at Kalari Kovilakom will make you believe so. Known as the palace of ayurveda, Kalari Kovilakom is a beautifully renovated 19th century South Indian palace situated near Kerala's Annamalai Hills. Legend has it that the owner of this palace, Prince Dharmavarman, suffered from a skin ailment and was greatly benefitted by the healing spring waters and venga trees that grew around it. Today, Kalari Kovilakom has been restored into a unique space that retains the age-old philosophy of the property. It amalgamates the healing experience of ayurveda, organic farming and a nature-based livelihood with the luxuries of palace living. Guests here sample the produce of a fully self-sustainable ayurvedic kitchen, natural remedies created from freshly picked herbs, a variety of massages, and hatha yoga classes. Other activities include classes in yoga nidra (a meditative technique meant to induce deep relaxation) and the ancient martial arts practice of Kalaripayattu. There are four kinds of specialised wellness packages: Rasayana Chikitsa (anti-ageing); Manashanthy (stress relief); Pancha Karma (rejuvenation); and Thanlyakina Chikitsa (weight reduction), usually lasting 14, 21 or 28 days.

Getting There
Kalari Kovilakom is located in the old princely capital town of Kollengode in Palakkad, Kerala. The nearest international airport is Cochin at 105 km, a two-and-a-half-hour drive away.

Bookings
The palace has 18 suites, 20 colonial western-styled rooms, and other traditionally appointed double rooms. For package prices and other details, visit kalarikovilakom.com.



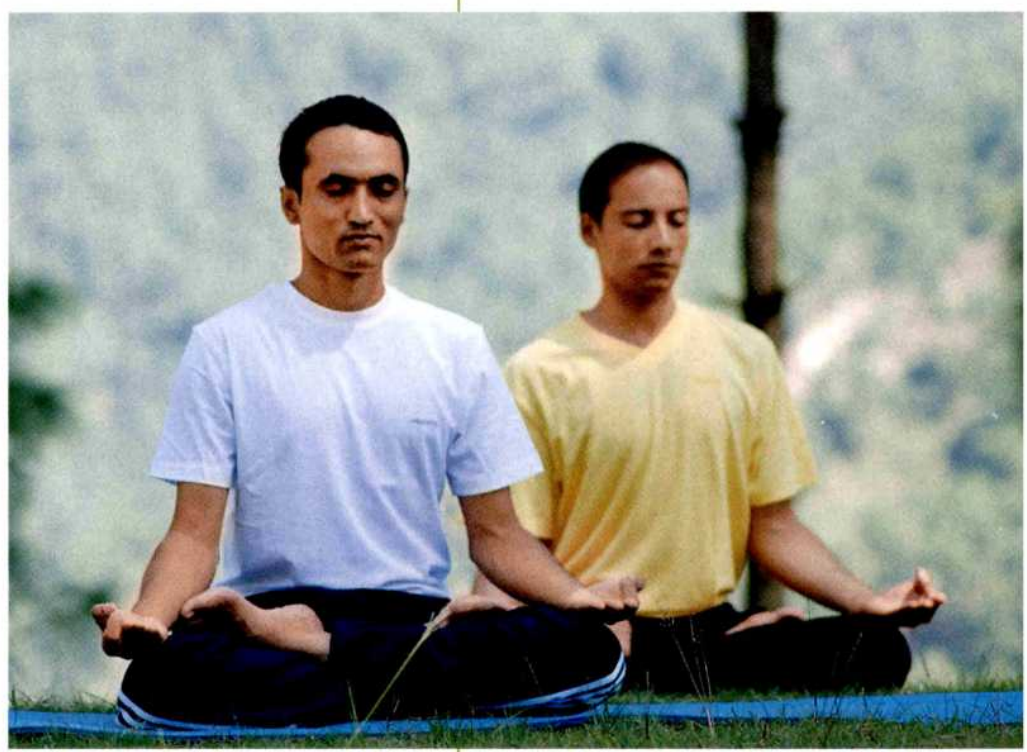
Jindal Naturecure Institute, Bangalore

Naturopathy

Run by the Sitaram Jindal Foundation, a charitable organisation, the institute is the final word when it comes to alternative healing through nature sciences. This residential naturopathy hospital is spread across an eco-friendly and self-sustainable 120-acre plot of lush greenery in Bangalore, Karnataka. People suffering from various medical conditions, especially lifestyle-related ones such as asthma, diabetes, hypertension, arthritis, migraine and abdominal problems, can enroll in a residential programme. The facility is staffed by 12 trained alternate therapists and practitioners who heal through a non-invasive, drugless therapy that combines Indian nature cure with yoga, diet therapy, physiotherapy and acupuncture. Ideally, the doctors at the institute recommend that a person undergo treatment for a three-week period. However, there is a shorter 10-day course offered for guests with time constraints. A stay here offers the patient Naturopathy's central therapy of a controlled and prescribed diet, depending on the person's ailments and physical condition. This is supplemented with yoga sessions, counselling, physiotherapy, physical workouts, laughter therapy, purging treatments (meant for cleaning the bowels), mud baths and massages.

Getting There
Jindal Naturecure Institute lies on Tumkur Road, in the suburbs of Bangalore. The institute is a 40-minute drive from the city centre.

Bookings
Accommodation begins at ₹5,000 per night for a single cottage on a twin-sharing basis, and goes up to ₹10,000 per night for more expensive rooms (taxes extra). Though most treatments are free or are included in your stay charges, some require the payment of a nominal fee. For bookings, visit jindalnaturecure.org/



Getting There
Located 43 km (an hour's drive) from Bangalore Airport

Bookings
There are 14 exclusive rooms, three en-suite poolside cottages, eight tented rooms and a three-bedroom garden cottage. The rates for the resort start at ₹12,000 a night. You can also opt for long-stay programmes such as Wellness For The Soul at a price tag of ₹2.96 lakh (approx), per person for 14 days. To make reservations, log on to shreyasretreat.com.

Shreyas Yoga Retreat, Bangalore

Yoga and Spa Treatments

Shreyas is arguably the only retreat in India that is dedicated to the spiritual tradition of yoga, combined with minimalist and meditative luxury. One of the most exclusive, sought-after and upscale resorts in the world dedicated to Indian mysticism and wellness, Shreyas has been listed in the 2011 Relais & Châteaux Guide. The retreat offers a variety of meditation classes, daily yoga, chanting sessions and ayurvedic spa therapies. Spread across 25 acres of verdant estate, the space includes cottages, organic garden, infinity swimming pools, an amphitheatre, a yoga pavilion and lush outdoor spaces. A veritable therapy here is the Shreyas singature facial: a four-step treatment that cleanses, purifies, exfoliates, tones and tightens the skin. A rich concoction of honey, milk and curd is used to cleanse, strawberries to exfoliate and essential oils to nourish the skin. A freshly prepared organic scrub and mask helps drain toxins, and improves circulation.

Getting There
Alila Diwa Goa is a 30-minute drive away from the Goa Dabolim Airport.

Bookings
An all-inclusive stay package at the wellness retreat can set you back by ₹9.25 lakh. The package includes accommodation in ultra-luxe rooms, which come with private pools, meals, spa services, health supplements, medical analysis, nutritional analysis, dietary education and fitness training. For information and reservations, log on to alilahotels.com/diwagoa

Bio Resurge Clinic, Alila Diwa Goa

Weight Loss

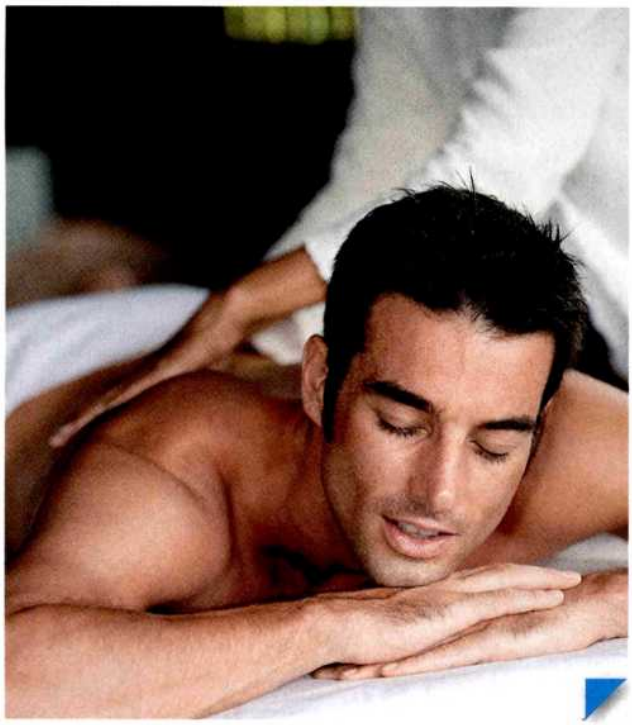
Picture a fitness boot-camp with creature comforts and seaside views – that's Bio Resurge for you. It is a private 'clinic' housed at the Alila Diwa resort, located on the idyllic Majorda beach in the south of Goa. An exclusive institution that allows just 10 clients at a time, it promotes comprehensive health through its weight-loss programme. Developed by Glen Schirmer, an Australian fitness guru who has trained tennis champs and Olympic athletes, the 28-day wellness/fitness programme at the clinic focuses on helping individuals regain health, and reverse "health pathologies" by gaining as much lean body mass (LBM) as possible while losing maximum body fat via massages, workouts, power walks and healthy eating.

column

Fighting Stress, Naturally

Heading for a nervous breakdown? Don't rush to the shrink just yet. Here are some natural ways to set you right

COLIN HALL



IT'S 8 AM, AND YOU ARE ALREADY LATE FOR WORK. Rushing into the washroom for that seven-minute shower, you think about the day ahead – the meetings, the gruelling Q&A sessions with clients, and the ever-ongoing race against the clock to meet project deadlines. Half an hour later, you stumble out the door only to find a long-overdue credit card bill waiting in your letterbox. Haven't paid that yet, have you? The way your life's going, you could be hurtling towards a nervous breakdown – or worse.

Studies show that nearly 85% of illnesses today are caused by work-induced stress and an unhealthy lifestyle. The most obvious consequences of this phenomenon – which leads to fatigue, forgetfulness, lack of motivation, depression, headache and insomnia – are absenteeism and a downward spiral in productivity. Consequently, a majority of the people who opt for stress management, detox or rejuvenation programmes are corporate captains. Let's look at two 'natural' ways to regain charge of your life.

AYURVEDA

From the Ayurvedic perspective, there are three different manifestations of day-to-day stress – mental, emotional, and physical. Here are a few therapies that can help you deal with them.

Abhyanga (soothing massage with special herbal oils) Abhyanga initially works at the physical level to soothe aching muscles and tense nerves, and eventually impacts the mind. It is specifically beneficial for those suffering from low stamina during the day and restless sleep at night.

Siroabhyanga (siro-head, abhyanga-massage) Besides the scalp, this treatment also works on the face, shoulders, upper back and chest. People suffering from low concentration issues and faltering memory can benefit from Siroabhyanga.

Sirodhara (siro-head, dhara-continuous flow) Sirodhara relaxes the person and rejuvenates both body and soul – bringing about a free flow of positive energy. It is an effective cure for insomnia.

AROMATHERAPY

Essential oils, the core of aromatherapy, have a direct physiological and psychological effect on people – bringing about relaxation. A list of essential oils:

Lavender It has restorative and sedative qualities, relieving tension, depression, panic and nervous exhaustion.

Neroli An oil that relaxes the mind, it relieves chronic anxiety, depression, fear, shock and stress.

Rose Soothes the mind and helps with stress.

Sandalwood Useful for tension, depression, nervous exhaustion and anxiety.

Sweet Marjoram Relaxes the nervous system and relieves anxiety and stress. Helps calm hyperactive people.

Chamomile Has a calming and relaxing effect, especially on the nervous system.

The author is spa director, Ananda in the Himalayas

Victorinox Travel Gear

Victorinox Automatic Umbrella

The unique Titanium-Enhanced Umbrella from Victorinox comes with Auto-Open & Close System. The product reflects the company's motto of functionality, design, innovation and quality like every other Victorinox product.
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- Large stash pocket and full-length zippered pocket store tickets, passport and most sizes of currency
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Colors Available: Black and Red

ESPA at The Leela Palace Udaipur

The Leela Palace Udaipur, a stunning modern day palace inspired by the magic and grandeur of Udaipur's past located on the banks of Lake Pichola, presents the perfect setting for indulgent relaxation and rejuvenation amidst serene surroundings. Spanning over 10,000 square feet, ESPA, India's only tented luxury spa, is majestically located in the courtyard gardens with views over the lake and provide holistic and deeply therapeutic treatments with products developed from the finest, organic plant extracts and oils from around the world. The spa's one-of-a-kind air-conditioned tents, set amidst private pools and fragrant gardens, fuse centuries-old local artisanal designs of Rajasthan. ESPA Treatments are performed in the privacy of the spa tents. For guests who wish to enjoy their spa journey with a loved one, the Couples and Palace Suites offer specially created couple's ceremonies along with a private swimming pool and relaxation area with stunning views of the lake. The special ESPA Ceremonies - from Intensive Facials and Massages to Signature Ayurvedic Treatments - are a unique fusion of western and eastern therapies to nourish the mind, body and soul. An extensive menu of luxurious ESPA facials, body treatments, hot stone massages and signature rituals is available to suit individual needs and skin type. ESPA at The Leela Palace Udaipur is the ultimate in relaxation amidst world class luxury.

calmasutra

A theatre of creation and recreation, sex is the proverbial stress-buster you've been longing for. Text by R PALLAVI

FORNICATION NO LONGER requires the consent of the king. What it needs, however, is an aroused sense of being and some extra inches of stamina.

While it usually falls victim to stress, sex can turn healer too – the way it slowly but surely releases pressure knotted in tired muscles through every science figuring in the textbook imagination of a generation. Though there is no one way of getting it right, finding a balanced approach through the right food, exercise and attitude will help you nail 'em all, literally.

Moves like Jagger

Stress isn't just in your mind; it quietly seeps into your tired veins and assimilates itself in your muscles, especially the shoulders and thighs. Squatting exercises and push-ups before sex are as necessary as a shower before a swim. The Swiss-ball press-up works on the shoulders, chest and triceps. This is a regular push-up, except that you do it with shins placed on a Swiss ball. Keeping the feet higher up will build endurance for the conventional missionary pose. The lower back-lie down firms up the lower back and abs, and works wonders in the full-court press (her legs over your shoulders). For this, draw your knees to your chest and grasp your legs behind the knees, and hold for 30 seconds.

To achieve the right swing, do hip flexors. For this, you need to step forward so your feet are a metre apart, knees slightly bent. Now, push your pelvis forward until you feel a stretch. Finally, you need to build stamina by mimicking the motions involved in the act. Lie on your back with knees bent. Squeeze your glutes and raise them off the floor until your body forms a straight line. This readies the hamstrings and glutes even for eccentric postures.

It's a Long Drive

You are what you eat, not how you feel. Enhanced sexual performance comes with its own diet chart. Greener pastures are what you need to tread, so stock up on leafy veggies. These are rich in zinc, thereby encouraging sperm production. Popeye's favourite food, on the other hand, is a potent source of magnesium that helps dilate blood vessels and effect better blood flow to the genitals. While a glass of sparkling wine is almost prescribed for foreplay, it's the catechin content of unsweetened green tea that's a better mood maker. While you're fishing around for food, also pick up oily cold water sea creatures like salmon, sardines, mackerel and tuna. These are all about Omega-3 fatty acids DHA and EPA, which raise dopamine levels in the brain and help with sexual arousal.

If you thought dark chocolate and strawberries were sketchy props from an 80's erotic novel, you're still uninitiated. While bitter cocoa contains a compound called phenylethylamine, which releases the same endorphins triggered by sex, red berries carry Vitamin B & C, natural libido and estrogen boosters.

Heal the Breach

It's always a good time to start reading between the sheets. You can begin by embracing the spiritual dimension of your relationship. Sexual healers say feelings of unconditional love, ownership and belonging have to be cultivated for a healthy intimate space. Therefore, pillow talks, cuddling and wordlessly staring each other in the eyes are hearty practices.

Nidra yoga, a form of guided meditative sleep, helps introduce you to your internal strengths. Tantra meditation, if done right, can end with a 'cosmic-orgasm'.

Instead of subjecting yourself to trance or meditative music, pick out tracks that you might have romanced to earlier – a soft jazz favourite or a piano symphony, anything works. Top this up with a hot oil massage before and a cold shower after, and you've got yourself a smooth ride home.

GET SMARTER IN BED!

The smartphone has entered your bedroom too. Here are four apps that promise to make your sex life a lot smoother than you imagined it to be.

Men's Health Workouts
This app has 25 pre-loaded workouts, over 150 exercises, workouts sorted by A-Z goals, step-by-step instructions, training logs and a timer to track sets, reps and personal process. Builds endurance and strength. Price $1.99

All-In-One Yoga

The app offers HD shots of over 300 yoga poses with audio and video guides and 40 pre-programmed yoga routines. Customise a schedule with your kind of music and, presto! You're ready for sex. Price $5.99

Nature Sound Sleep and Relax
Brain wave therapy lets out subliminal messages that are heard not by the ear, but by the subconscious mind. It can also be used as environmental music aimed at cleansing, balancing and building positive energy in the environment. A great mood builder. App is Free

Headspace On-The-Go

Headspace organises and customises meditation schedules for your specific needs. It contains bite-sized techniques that help you focus more and stay calm, two pre-requisites for a healthy intimate space. App is Free

TOKYO DRIFT

Transit in Tokyo? Here's a hop-skip-and-jump guide to the city. Bask in the city's quaint glory in a 24-hour jaunt; we're sure you'll return for more, and real soon.

TEXT BY R PALLAVI

"SURFACE IS AN ILLUSION, BUT SO IS DEPTH." British draughtsman David Hockney may have had some inkling about art or at least a perception, but for me, he summed up Japan. Tourists wield a strong urgency about 'knowing' the country, but just as they begin to feel adequately informed, something more confusing yet fascinating unravels before them. Tokyo, in all its bullet train modernity, is my case in point. While there are no patriarchs rhapsodising tea-house riddles on the streets, an aged guard outside a swanky bank office opens up his iPhone gallery, points to pictures of the Taj, and draws an easy analogy with Japan's history. A country of paradoxes, it surprises, shocks and stuns – all at once.

Those on a transit visit to Asia's most progressive capital should follow the cruise code: maximise deck time and minimise room time. A 24-hour wrap of Tokyo should ideally commence with an early morning visit to the Asakusa Shrine. Swathed in the rising sun, the sharp and almost authoritative façade of the pagodas preserves the colonial prowess of the ancient Edo Empire. The temple complex is decked out with rice paper lamps and incense cones, and is crisscrossed by narrow streets punctuated by handfolded paper fans, ebony combs and glitter-lined masks. You may want to stock up on souvenirs at this point, because the rest of Tokyo won't feed your cultural clichés. For instance, the edge of your eye might be searching for a Maiko girl with seasonal flowers suspended by the side of her rounded jaws and that almost edible, immaculate face paint. Instead, what you find here are Maiko and Sumo makeover studios that leave you with photo-souvenirs and a discomforting sense of Indian hill station holidays from the 90s that are frozen in summer-vacation memories.

The morning hours witness a wave of Tokyo's workforce ebbing and flooding the city's many metro lines. Excuse yourself from the inland chaos and hop aboard the Tokyo Water Bus to the Hamarikyu Garden. Flanked by skyscrapers, the garden's pine and plum-laden expanse offers an unexpected calmness. The cherry blossoms and emerald green shrubs are mirrored, and multiplied, by the still lake waters. Follow the wooden-bridge path that leads to the garden's traditional tea-house and feast on a breakfast of green tea, miso soup and the whitest of white soba noodles. On weekdays, you'll spot tiny-footed

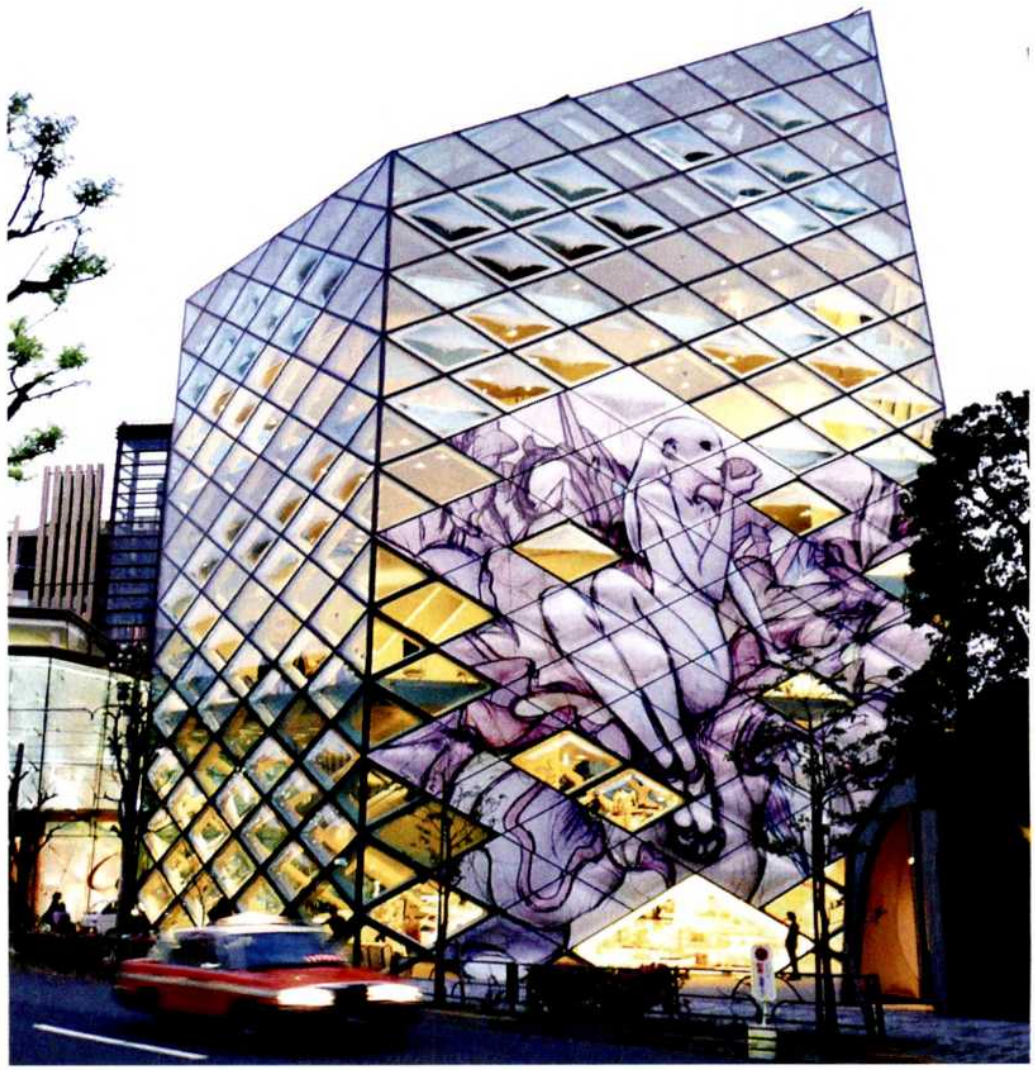
The old Tokyo tower, like a lighthouse, beams over the city's skyline

scholars in crisp uniforms taking a study tour, while the weekends bring out the kimono-clad folk, with their sharp water-colour prints on glossy silk.

By noon, a siesta-like weariness falls upon the town. This is the time to check into the Mita Subway Line and debark at Onarimon Station. Here lies the red-and-white version of the Eiffel, which the state calls Tokyo Tower. Unlike its counterpart, there are no crowds thronging the entrances. Has something that was once a strong symbol of the city's economic ascendency become a thing of the past in public memory? Your confusion firms up when the locals repeatedly insist that you visit the new Tower Skytree, a short cab ride away. In my opinion, a trip to both the observatories is a must. Besides enjoying two distinct bird's eye perspectives of the same cityscape, the towers convey that Tokyo might be the world's only megapolis that's so open to rebuilding and reshaping its architectural symbolism. There's nothing like a London Bridge or a Tiananmen Square to reaffirm its civic history.

The unorthodox urban sketch and

Quirky glass art on the Prada building in Omotesando



Best Business Hotels

- **The Ritz Carlton** - Located in the heart of Rappongi's diplomatic and entertainment hub, the rooms and suites occupy the top nine floors of the 53-storey Midtown Tower. Price: ₹30,000

- **InterContinental Tokyo Bay** - Offers views of the Sumida River and Bay. It is connected by walkway to the Takeshiba Station and Odaiba, a large artificial island in Tokyo Bay. Price: ₹15,000

- **The Peninsula** - A stone's throw from Ginza, the hotel is famed for its gourmet dining scene. The traditional multi-course meal Kaiseki is famous at a restaurant called Tsuruya. Price: ₹35,000

- **Park Hyatt** - It served as an inspiration and backdrop for the movie Lost in Translation (2003). The hotel has a full service business centre that's open 24 hours a day. Price ₹36,000

QUICK TIPS

Money Matters
Tokyo runs largely on cash. It's safe to carry bank notes, and for ¥20,000(₹12,000), you should be able to travel across the city by metro, eat meals and do some sightseeing. Tokyo post offices have ATMs that accept foreign cards.

Around Town
Cab rates start at ¥710, which buys you 2km (after 11 pm it's 1.5 km), then the meter rises by ¥80 every 275m (every 220 \m or so after 11pm). The city has 13 subway lines. Make sure you download a detailed English map before heading out.

Try your hand at the empty orchestra at a karaoke box in the Shinjuku area ▲

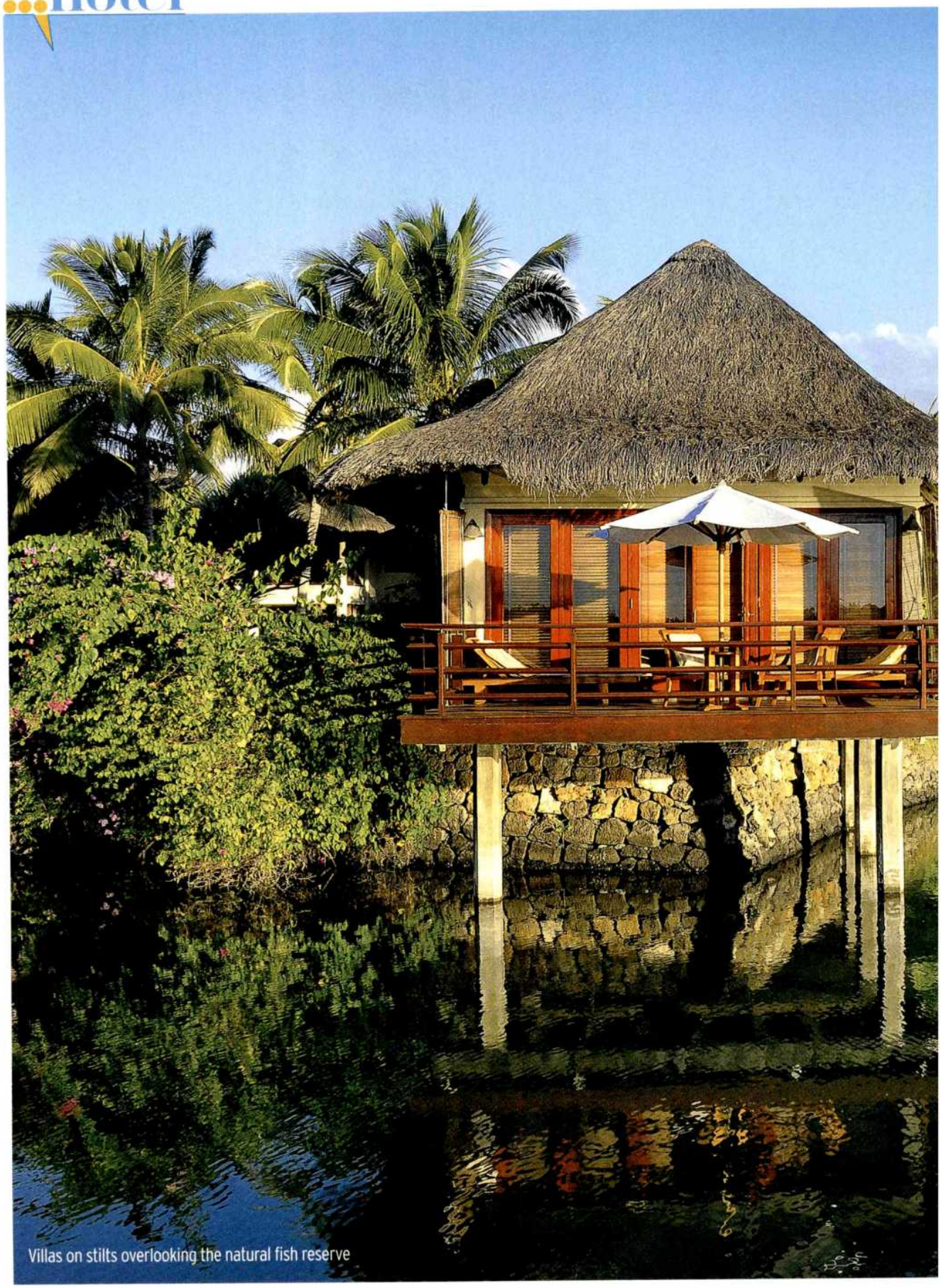
the lack of a city centre inadvertently deflect the city's real character onto its dispersed cultural hubs. The Shibuya Shinjuku Line guides you to two such zones: Omotesando and Harajuku. Visit both, and in this order. The former is a swank street where giant glass boutiques peep from behind a thicket of zelkova trees. The malls are scattered with gourmet eateries where you can halt for lunch. Yasaiya Mei dishes out tofu burgers and eggplant doria of sake kasu, and Toraya Cafe does a flavourful version of An Paste, a creamy azuki.

A simple walk to the neighbouring Harajuku is like entering a different cosmos. In the crammed nooks and bylanes of the quaint youth district, Metallica shares rack space with Doraemon and Japanese Che Guevaras etched out on the usual knick knacks. Keep a few thousand Yens spare because credit cards won't always be a welcome choice and you don't want to be stuck trying to explain what you need.

The crimson ball of the sun sets, and the moon, much like a chipped piece of nail, appears to activate Tokyo's most animated district, Ginza. Here, giant screens flash complicated Japanese text in a colourful neon script. Besides being a steadfast bastion of upmarket fashion, with brands like Gucci, Chanel and Dior nudging each other, Ginza houses art galleries like the Galleria Grafica Tokio and Wacoal Ginza Art Space that showcase Japan's new and bold art scene.

There's also the Kabuki-Za theatre where the centuries-old kabuki drama is staged. While the show goes on for about five hours and comprises three to four sequences, you can always grab last-minute seats for a single act.

At dinner time, step into the Yurakucho Line and hit Roppongi Hills that hedge the city's hip business district. Flooded with karaoke parlours, sushi-noodle bars and strip clubs, this is where the city downs its after-hours. Finally, on your way out, do a sake sampling at the duty free. If you've managed to stay sober through it all, you'll know instantly the one that suits you best. If not, who cares, perception is reality, right?



Villas on stilts overlooking the natural fish reserve

Enchanted Island

Sunny days in Mauritius are best spent by the sparkling turquoise ocean. Le Prince Maurice by Constance adds to the charm.

TEXT BY ANKIT GUPTA

IT IS THE CLARITY OF WATER THAT GETS YOUR attention first. Sitting in a speedboat in the middle of the ocean, you can count starfish on the sandy bed below. With a brilliant, reflective surface, the water is quite unlike anything I have seen before; deep blue on the horizon, turquoise a little further up, and a pale green that spools around you. The water is transparent, no hidden agendas here, and shallow enough for you to dig your feet into the rich texture of sea sand. One of us would have actually done that, if it hadn't been for the fact that we had to get to our resort, tucked away in the north east side of the island country of Mauritius. The incredibly scenic ocean, familiar-yet-foreign Indian faces and sugar plantations paint a pretty picture. And then it strikes you that this is actually Africa! If you have been promising your family a vacation that

KEEP BUSY

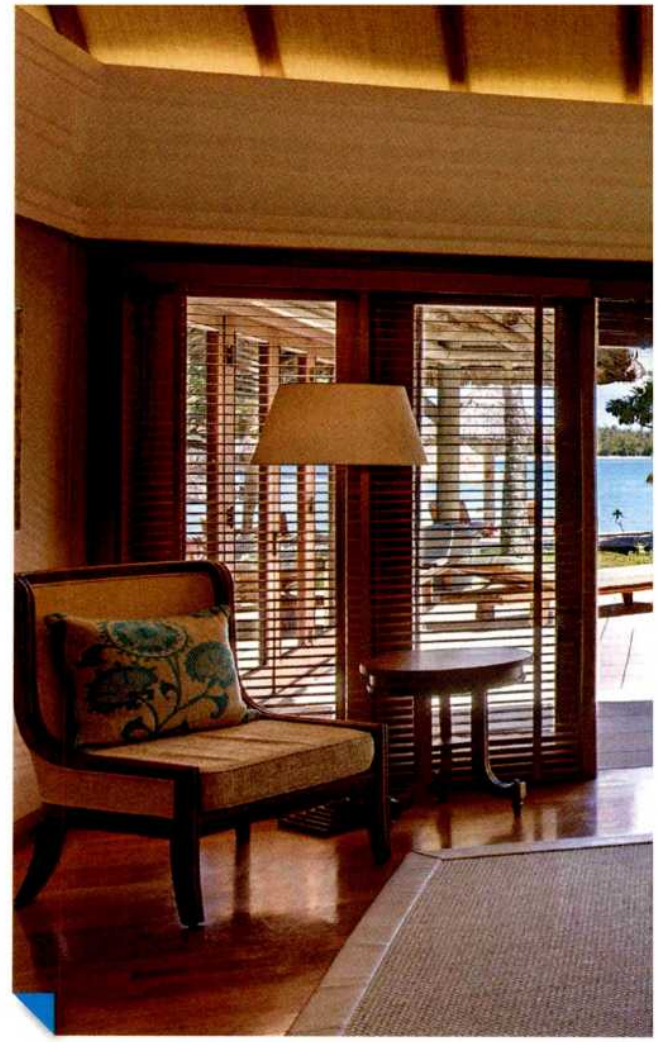
Golf
Go golfing on either of the two 18-hole championship golf courses, just 5 minutes from the resort at Constace's Belle Mare Plage. The 'Legend' and 'Links' golf courses, which have been hosting the MCB Golf Tour Championship, offer golf lessons from the Marc Farry Academy. Golf courses are complimentary for all guests at Le Prince Maurice and there is a free shuttle service to and from the hotel.

Other Activities
The hotel provides a wide range of land and water sport facilities, including waterskiing, fly fishing, boat excursions, catamaran cruises, deep sea fishing, scuba diving PADI & CMAS and parasailing

Kiddy Time
The Children's 'Les Petits Princes' provides a games room, dining area and private children´s pool for children aged from four to 11 years. Indoor and outdoor activities are organised daily under supervision.

Getting There
There are daily flights from India to Mauritius. Indians are issued a 30-day visa on arrival.

Best Time to Visit
Mauritius enjoys a relatively mild climate. The most pleasant times to visit the island are between the months of April and June, and between September and December.



allows them to turn into happy beach bums and takes you away from all the noise that defines everyday work, Mauritius is the place to head to.

Arriving by speedboat, we are greeted by a genteel bell boy, who remained the face of calm and high spirits through our time there. As I make my way into Constance Le Prince Maurice, the first thing that strikes me is the subtlety. It is a luxury hotel, but nothing seems to be in a hurry to scream out to say so. Thatched roofs, lazy palm trees, a quiet lagoon and the rich, deep burnt sienna colour of the wood make for a picture that's exquisitely desirable. I was told later that the endearing qualities of the resort have made it home to several celebrities. In fact, a certain high-profile publisher who vacations here each year with his stack of books has a habit of leaving half-read manuscripts across the resort. Needless to say, given their love for discretion, the staff ensures every one of them finds its way back to his room unblemished; it's almost as though they never left his side. The resort opened its doors to the public in 1998 and 15 years later, the 89-suite property remains untouched by time. Its feng-shui-inspired architecture enhances its 148-acre footprint that includes a fantastic fishing reserve. Sixty four junior suits, 12 family suits, 12 individual villas on stilts and a princely suite make this property an interesting choice for the luxury vagabond, who is in search of his piece of solitude in paradise. Each room has an exceptionally comfortable bed, soft down and feather duvets, and

The massive private villas are beautifully decorated and have fabulous ocean views ▲
Enjoy a truly Mauritian-style salad at restaurants in the resort ◀

a range of pillows. The dark wood floors are polished to perfection and the room is kitted out with a flat-screen television, an iPad mini, a much-needed Nespresso machine, an iHome Ipod docker and a thoughtfully stocked minibar. However, if you want a life less ordinary, the villas on stilts are recommended. Ideal for families and with direct beach access and a private heated pool, this is a vacation made in heaven. It also helps that three of the villas overlook the fabulous fish reserve. There are also two palapa-covered loungers on the sand reserved just for you and stocked with chilled bottled water, should you doze in the sun while the kids frolick on the beach.

The feng shui-inspired architecture of the resort is spread across 148 acres and includes a fish reserve

If food is an important part of your vacation, the resort won't disappoint. The menus have been designed by French executive chef Michael Scioli and F&B manager Samuel Pellegrini. L'Archipel, the resort's main restaurant, overlooks the pool and the beach and is part al fresco. It offers a la carte and themed buffet dinners . Though vegetarians are usually at sea on island resorts, the chef here is happy to accommodate your preferences and whip up something off the regular menu. While you eat, it's best to ask Jérôme Carlier, head sommelier, for his recommendation of rosés to go with your food. A perfectly rounded meal.

Other than L'Archipel, there are two bars – Lotus and Laguna – both of which offer an interesting choice of aperitifs before and after dinner. While we were at the resort, there was also talk of a sushi bar being set up soon.

If you decide to tuck the kids into bed one night and take your wife to a magical dinner, it has to be at Le Branchois, which is on a par with several Michelin-star restaurants. This unique floating seafood restaurant has five decks and is situated near the natural fish reserve. It can be reached via a wooden pathway bordering the mangroves – locating the restaurant is half the fun. Le Barachois overlooks the lagoon and is a combination of five floating, tented pontoons linked by teak gangplanks. While the dinner menu is simple, the experience is exceptional, accompanied by an occasional splash as a lone fish dives into the water. The time here is truly well spent, bringing you a step closer to the concept of barefoot luxury, Mauritius-style.

Bally Holdall

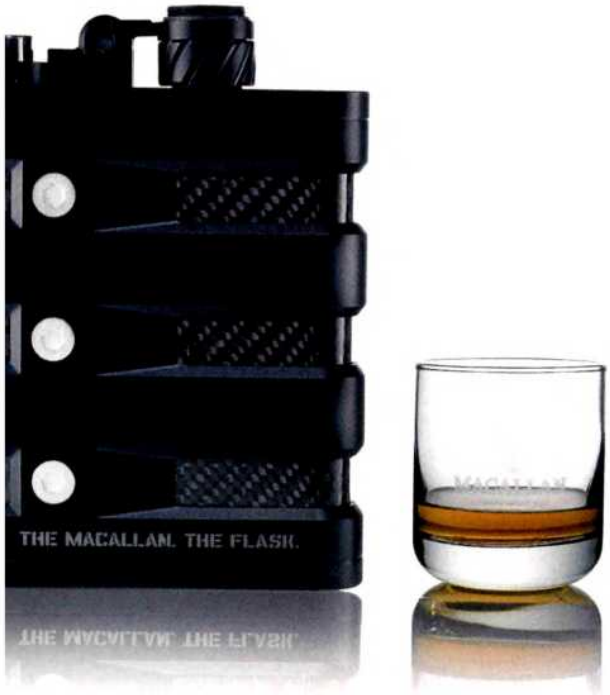
A soft briefcase that is smart without being overly formal, this Bally piece is an assured way of staying stylish in the workplace. Crafted from soft calf leather at the label's Swiss workshops, the bag comes embossed with the brand's signature stripes.

Price: On request

Address Home Black Pearl

Here's your little piece of fantasy. *Pirates of the Caribbean* fans can now take pride in possessing their own version of the Black Pearl. The model vessel is 35 inches long, and is crafted from solid wood. Its black hull and sails are meticulously hand-painted, bringing out every detail of a ship that was once the terror of the Caribbean. Truly a collector's item.

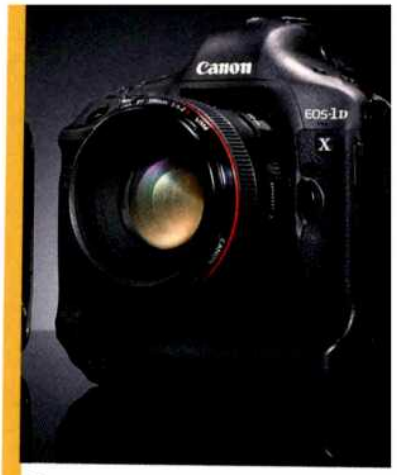
Price: On Request



The Macallan Flask

The Macallan and Oakley Inc collaborate to create The Flask; the Portable Purveyor of Pleasure. Made of aluminium, steel and carbon fibre with a rubberised bottom and side air vents, it is limited to 100 pieces only. Available online at themacallan.com

Price: 600 GBP (₹50,485)



Canon EOS-1D X

The Canon EOS-1D X combines speed with image quality to create the next-generation DSLR camera. A full-frame 18-megapixel sensor with dual processors sets the standard, and the ability to shoot up to 12 frames per second takes it beyond. Captures every memory, guaranteed!

Price: ₹4.6 lakh

Audemars Piguet Pride of Siam

As part of 'Pride Limited Editions' timepieces, which represent the heritage, arts and tradition of various countries, Audemars Piguet has launched a stunning all-white Royal Oak Offshore Chronograph as the Pride of Siam to pay homage to Thailand. The medal engraved on the case back represents the royal symbol of the white elephant, which once adorned the Siam flag. Limited to just 100 pieces, this is an object of pristine beauty.

Price: On request

Haas Brothers' Donatella Chair

All that glitters is not gold, but the Donatella chair comes pretty close. A shining beacon in the form of a design collaboration between Versace Home and Haas Brothers, the honeycomb brass pattern and the leather upholstery make it a statement piece fit for your home.

Price: On request

Asian by Choice

The pan-Asian cuisine at Baan Tao spells freshness all the way. BY R PALLAVI

IMAGINE A BLANKET OF WATER CASCADING down a black-stone facade; imagine cool mist numbing your ankles and elbows, and a gentle draft sifting through your hair; all this while you are indulging in a delicious meal. At Baan Tao, diners sit by a wooden deck, pointing childishly at the delicate ripples left behind by the delightful water installation. And if the diners are corporate honchos out to impress difficult clients, the quiet PDRs offer a serenity customised to their needs. The meal begins with clear vegetable soup. You lift the lid, and a starchy herb-infused cloud of steam that emanates from within moistens and readies the palate for what lies ahead. Next comes a cocktail of salad, with slippery white cloud-ears, shitake mushrooms, crunchy sweet peanuts and peppered gherkins, and you don't feel uncivilised as your chopstick hunts this down to the last living bean. The carnivores, meanwhile, slurp out the coconut milk-infused green chicken curry, which condenses a balanced sense of jaggery, Thai-basil and kafir lime leaves. In the red curry, you can spot several chunks of garlic, honeyed water-chestnut, artichokes, pok choy, asparagus and every veggie that inhabits Chinese kitchens. If local foodies are to be believed, chef Anthony Huang's team can wrap a neat dim sum around anything, from prawn to spinach and even sour cream and onion. Call for an assorted platter and you'll confirm this hypothesis rather indulgently. Then, carry forward the freshness of the meal with what may be the world's mildest dessert, the sesame laden fried Thai balls. In an unusual and rather ingenious pairing, down this with a couple of Sake servings which – thanks to the Japanese rationing system – come in cups the sizes of bottle caps. The restaurant stocks rare varieties like Hakatsuru Josen Tarvzake Sake, which is chilled and blends in with Thai curries beautifully, and the warmer Hakutsuru Sake Junmai Dai Ginjo, which chimes along with soy-soaked tempuras and teriyakis.

Thai green curry
Raw papaya salad

Meal for two
(alcohol extra)
₹2,000

(020) 41411234

SRIKANT NISHTALA

Pune

The private dining area is surrounded by an aesthetically fashioned water garden ▲

The pink-and-blue interiors of the restaurant recreate the kitschy feel of De Wallen ▲

The tomato and feta bruschetta ▶

A Taste of Kitsch

Bask in the garish red lights of De Wallen at the Amsterdam Kitchen and Bar. BY JIMMY JACOB

IN DELHI BUT YEARNING TO ESCAPE TO Europe? Hop across to the newest joint in town for a glimpse of all that De Wallen stands for.

Tucked away in Saket's DLF South Court mall, the Amsterdam Kitchen and Bar recreates the kitschy atmosphere of the Netherlands' notorious red-light destination through small details – almost to the point where you start expecting rows of dancing girls to turn up at the table. The music is largely techno, and on the walls – under a neon signboard declaring 'XXX Shop' – hang huge posters of blood red lips puckered up to kiss away any pretension of civility under your skin.

After you have feasted your eyes on the surroundings – complete with bedroom-styled furniture, rows of ultra-Dutch wooden clogs, a vintage bicycle and a typical De Wallen lamppost – you sit down and glance through the bar menu. In the cocktails section, the title of each alcoholic beverage – starting with Fore Play and ending with Orgasm – subscribes to the restaurant's raunchy theme. My companion and I, however, opted for the more modestly named Bhuban's Red Passion Levitation and Cool as Cucumber respectively.

Spinach florets, Pepper-crusted tenderloin steak

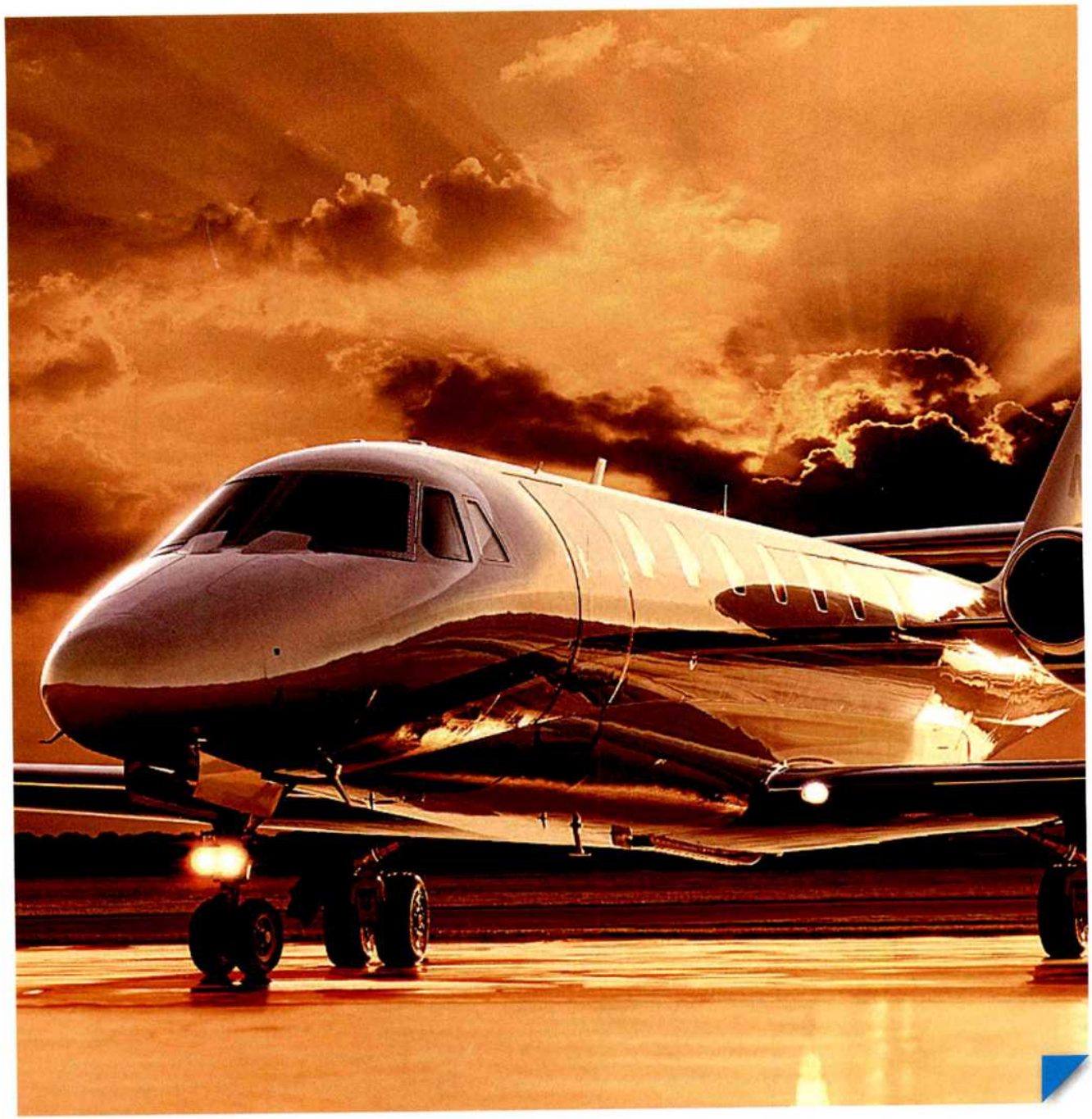
Meal for two (alcohol extra) **₹1,200**

(91) 9810111534

To begin, we nibbled on an assortment of delectable bites – tomato and feta bruschetta; spinach florets topped with melt-in-the-mouth shitake and pine nuts and stuffed veg skewers – all on a single platter. The spinach florets turned out to be our pick of the lot.

Moving on to the main course, we ordered pepper-crusted tenderloin steak (done medium-rare) and slow-cooked shanks of lamb, served with cous cous and warm vegetables. The steak was cooked to perfection – with a warm red centre – and the gravy accentuated the flavour of the meat, instead of masking it. The slow-cooked shanks of lamb were succulent, and a subtly spiced gravy accompanied the cous cous. Chocolate waffles for dessert provided the perfect ending to a memorable evening of kitsch. A paradijs to hang with colleagues after a week that's been hell at the desk.

splurge



Four Seasons in the Sun

A PRIVATE JET, SOME GORGEOUS STOPOVERS AND A PAMPERED FEW. THE FOUR SEASONS GROUP is taking 56 seekers of panache on a tour that covers Los Angeles, Hawaii, Bora Bora, French Polynesia, Sydney, Bali, Chiang Mai, the Taj Mahal, Istanbul and London. And that's not all, they can soak in bubble baths and partake in champagne dinners as well as customised gourmet menus between these stops. On land, there will be coupes and butlers at the guests' beck and call. Despite a hefty price tag of $87,970 per couple, the seats are selling like hot cakes. Take a cue.

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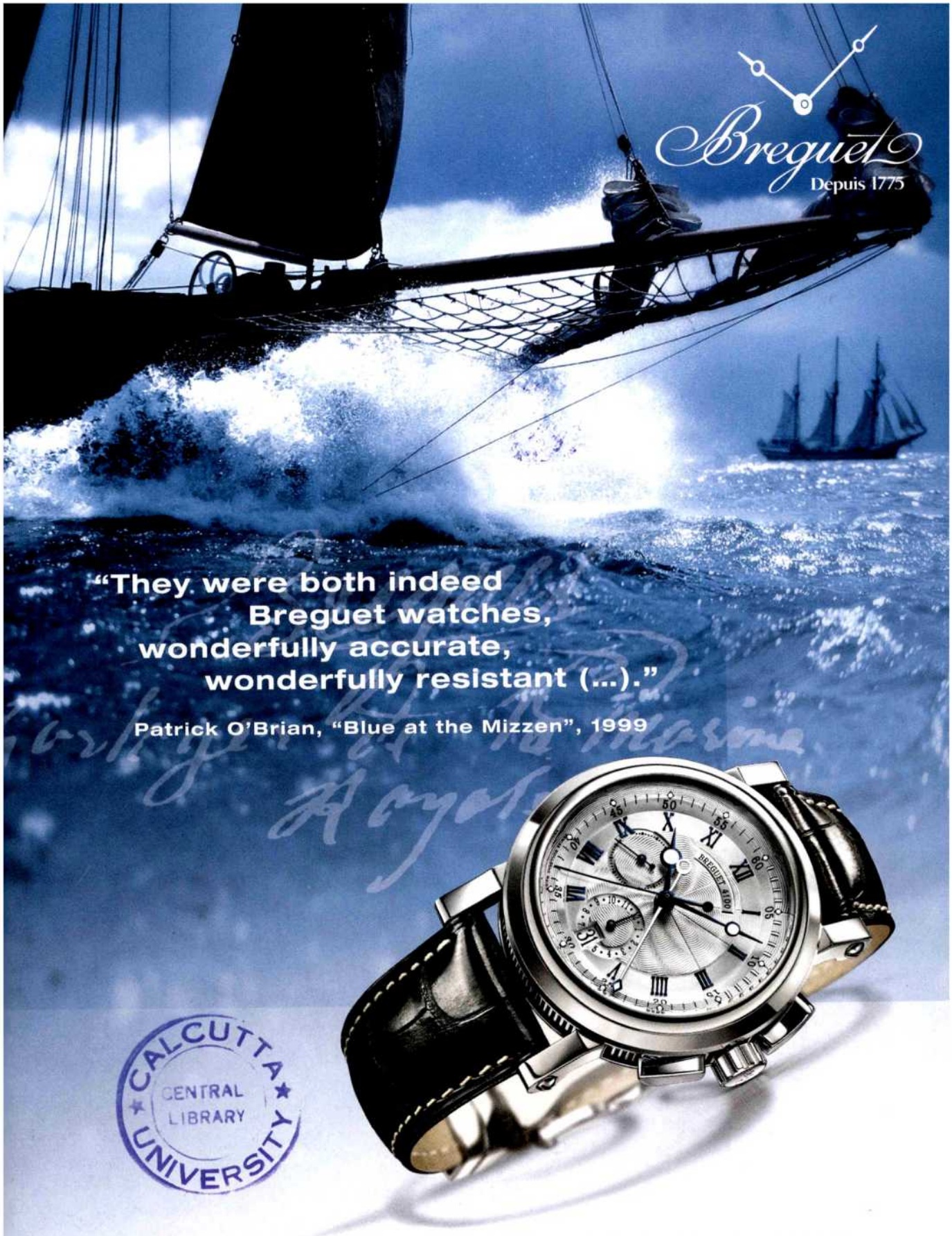

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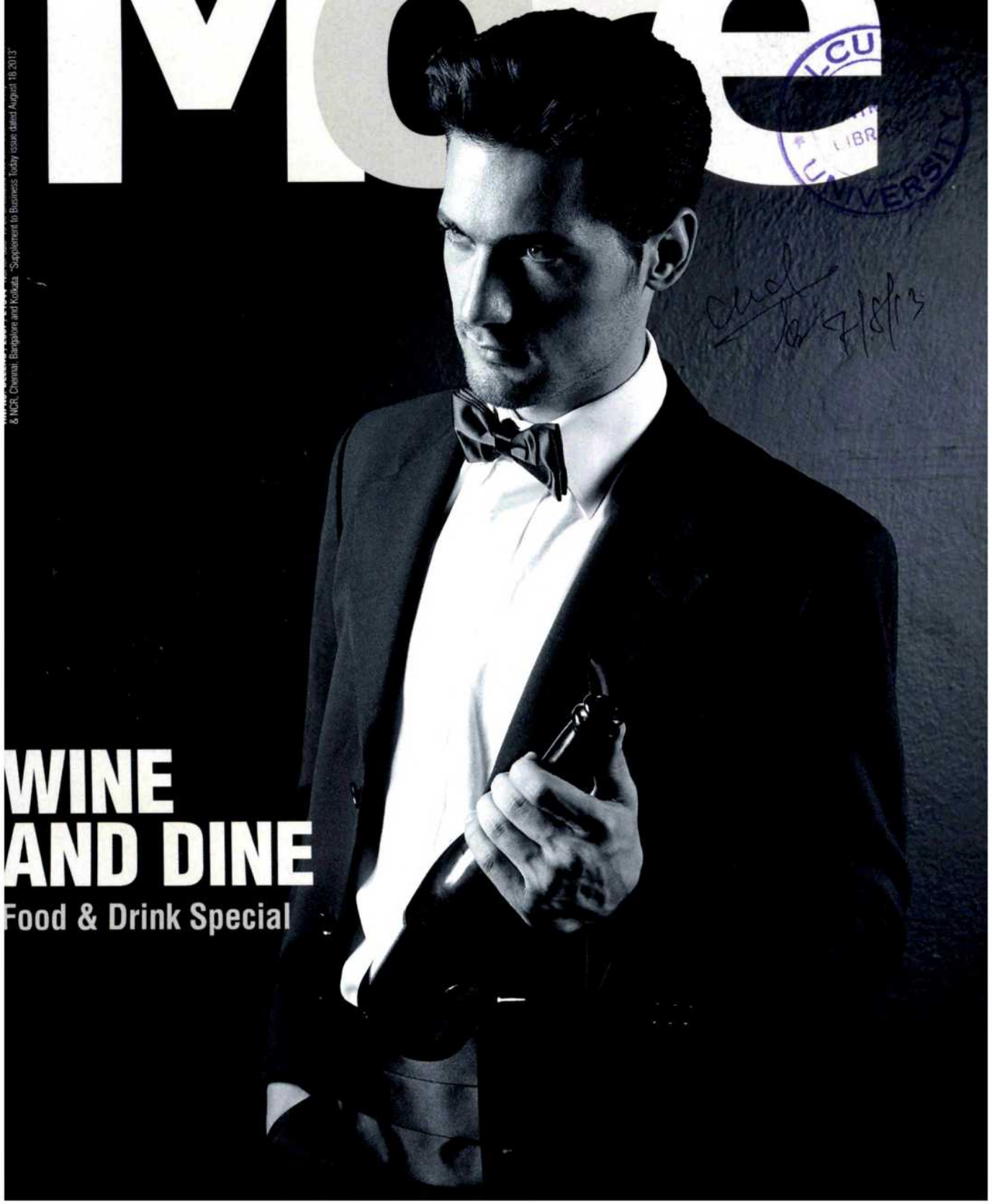

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Food & Drink Special

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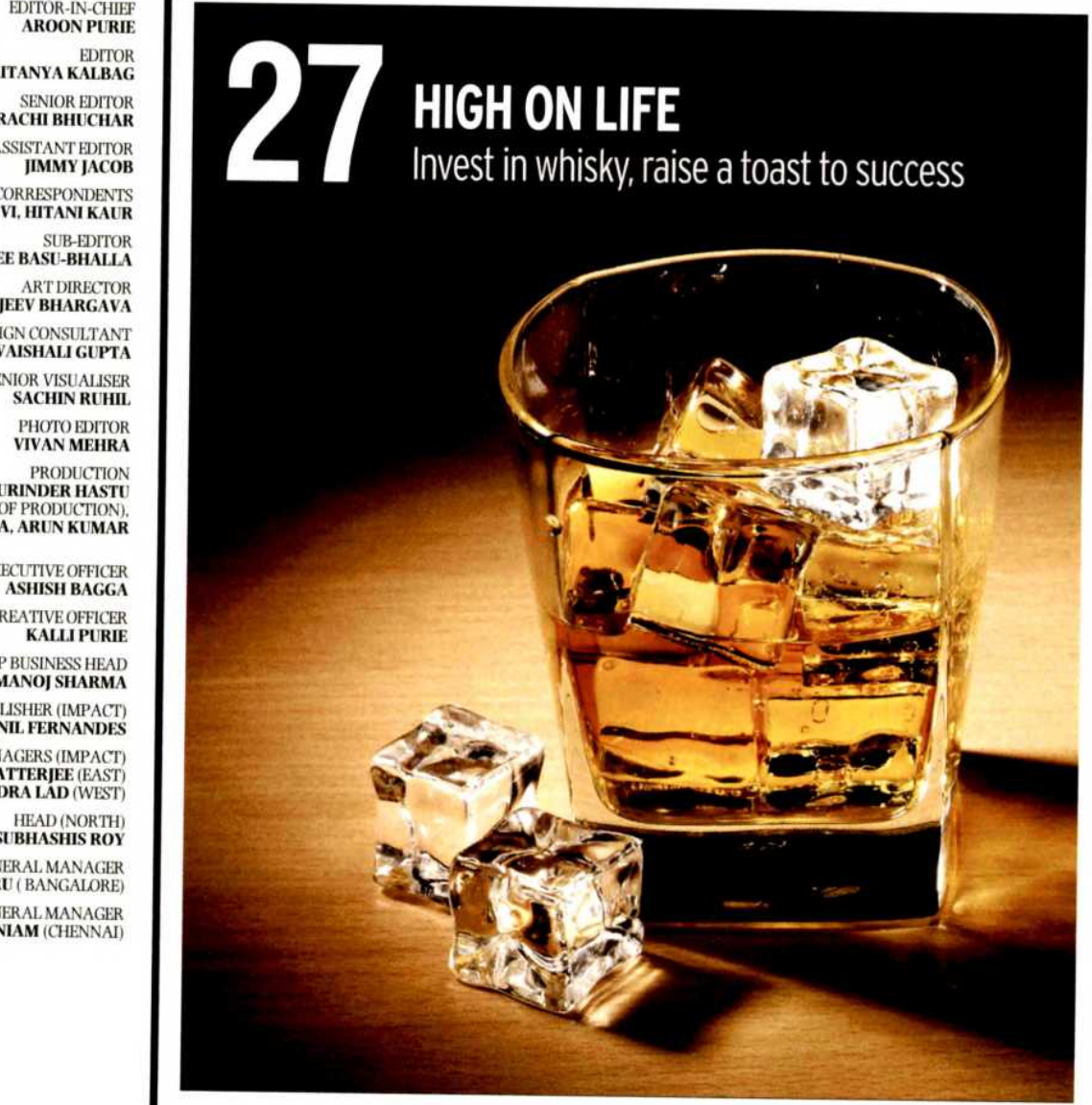

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SHOPPING AND MORE

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Holy Smokes

Daniel Carroll, cigar enthusiast and co-founder of the Cigar Club of India, picks out five must-try cigars of 2013.

DAVIDOFF 2000 – PETIT CORONA This Classic Davidoff grabs your attention through its perfect construction and wonderful non-lit draw – giving out woody and herby notes. It has earthy and leathery flavours, with a creamy undertone.

ARMENTEROS – PETIT CORONA Hand-rolled in the Dominican Republic by La Aurora, the rich and perfectly balanced flavours are a result of blending tobacco drawn from five different regions of the world – Brazil, Peru, Nicaragua, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic. Slim and firm, this Petit Corona burns beautifully.

GURKHA ASSASSIN – SHORT ROBUSTO Owned by the Hansotia family, Gurkha Assassin is well-appreciated by cigar aficionados for the Peruvian tobacco that is added to its Nicaraguan filler. This, along with a Brazillian Mata Fina Wrapper and the Dominican Republic Binder, gives Assassin a flavour of herb spices, leather, cocoa and a touch of citrus.

FONSECA KDT CADET – SHORT PANETELA One of the smallest and oldest hand-rolled Cuban brands, Fonseca KDT Cadet catches your attention with its unusual but attractive rice-paper packaging. This medium-strength cigar is the perfect post-lunch afternoon smoke, giving you a wonderful toasty and woody aroma with that typical earthy Cuban undertone.

ROCKY PATEL SUN GROWN – SHORT ROBUSTO This bold high-strength flavoured Honduran Cigar is one of the better cigars from Rocky Patel. The smoke is robust, sometimes overwhelming and brimming with dark-sweet tobacco flavour and spiciness. Covered with a five-year-old Sun Grown Ecuadorian Rosado wrapper, this cigar delivers a spicy-sweet element that you'll savour until the very last puff.

4 accessories your car doesn't need

Mammoth Rims

If your overall wheel diameter exceeds what the manufacturer has made room in the wheel well for, the tyres can start rubbing against the wheel well-liner each time you drive over a bump.

Coloured Headlights

They offer far less penetration of vision rays and are really prone to scattering in dusty Indian conditions.

Body Kits

Wide-body kits and air dams are supposed to channel air over and under the car, breathing extra air into the radiator, brakes and intake system. All this is taken care of if you're driving a high-performance car. Slapping it onto a humble sedan or a hatchback amounts to overkill.

Spoilers

Most aftermarket spoilers are merely show bits, and don't really create any downforce. In fact, cars are perfectly capable of turning corners at the limits they've been designed; there's no need for spoilers.

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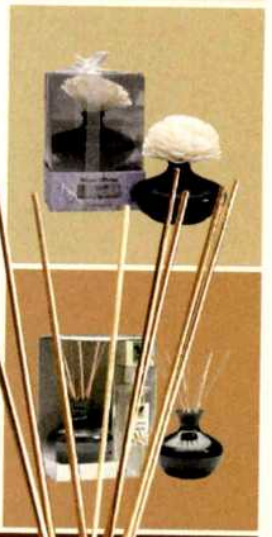

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How To Tie a Bow Tie

ILLUSTRATION: SACHIN RUHIL

1. Hold the tie around the neck, allowing the left end (A) to be a little longer than the right end (B). Now neatly cross end-A over B.
2. Take end-A and tuck it up in the hole between your neck and tie. Fold B at the widest part, holding it sideways and forming a bow.
3. Drop end-A over folded end-B and fold end-A up. Pass folded end-A under folded end-B, and through the loop behind folded end-B.
4. Tighten knot and straighten the newly created bow tie as needed, and you are all set to hit the party circuit.

Preparing for a Cyclothon

WANT TO CYCLE FOR A CAUSE, LIKE THEY DID IN MUMBAI RECENTLY FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION, WITHOUT ENDING UP IN A ROADSIDE HEAP? SOME TIPS

WORK THE VEHICLE

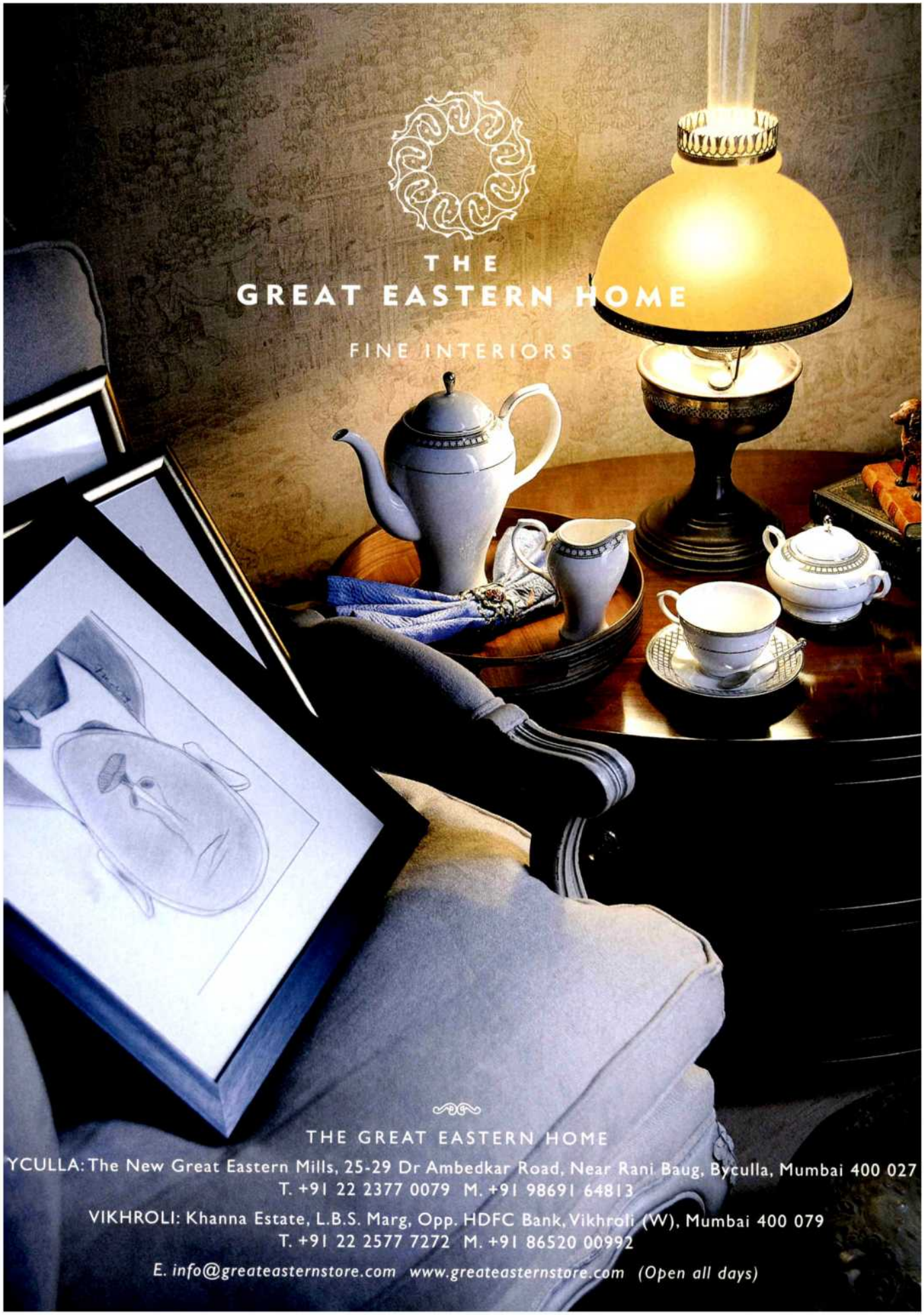
It's an exaggeration to say that you are at the mercy of your vehicle, but keeping the cycle in mint condition is a pre-requisite. While a machine like the Specialised Tarmac Mid Compact enables quick acceleration and sharp handling, the Bianchi Vertigo 105 is equipped with a high-end Campagnalo Veloce drivetrain for smoother pedalling. The Cervélo R3, on the other hand, offers greater rigidity without adding weight. From a month before the big race, you need to check for cleanliness and lubrication every 2-3 days. On racing day, make sure the saddle is adjusted, the wheel screwed on tight, and the chain lubricated.

FITNESS FIRST

Simply pedalling around town won't make you fit enough to take on a long-drawn cyclothon, especially one that passes through rocky terrains. First and foremost, you need to build cardiovascular endurance. This includes long slow-distance training, pace or tempo training, interval training, circuit training and fartlek training. A four-week-long training schedule before the race is advisable. Begin with a spell of 20 minutes a day and, as you get closer to the race, take it to three hours. Till two days before the race, keep the exercise minimal and focus on strategy.

DIET CHART

About three to four hours before the competition, have a bowl of fresh fruit, bread, bagels with peanut butter, or pasta with tomato sauce. Other recommended foods are baked potatoes, energy bars, cereal with milk and yoghurt. An hour before the competition, have fresh fruit such as apples, watermelon, peaches or oranges and up to one cup of your favourite sports drink.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HIGH FIDELITY

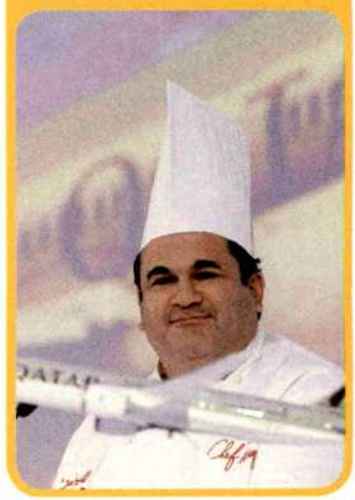
With a host of frequent flier programmes to pick from, read between the lines before pledging your loyalty.

Do your homework before picking a frequent flier programme ▲

THE WHOLE CONCEPT BEHIND FREQUENT FLIER PROGRAMMES IS TO BREED loyalty amongst customers – a win-win for the airline as well as its patrons. However, a recent study says otherwise. A poll conducted by British-based Collinson Latitude on a sample size of 1,005 people revealed that 40 per cent of the frequent fliers never end up redeeming their miles. Owing to tiresome conditions such as blackout dates, minimum spends, expiry dates and availability, frequent flier schemes often turn into a frustrating ordeal for patrons. Almost 60 per cent abandon hope of getting rewards because it takes too long to earn them anything of value. Interestingly, many airlines even prefer to sell reward miles to third parties such as banks, which distribute them among their own customers. The top frequent flier programmes, as put forth by *www.thepointsguy.com*, are Avios (British Airways), Aeroplan (formerly of Air Canada), ANA (of Japanese airline ANA), Miles & More (Lufthansa) and Flying Blue (Air France, KLM and Air Europa). However, it still remains your decision in the end.

FOODIE FLIGHTS

If you are craving a mid-air culinary extravaganza, Qatar Airways has just the thing for you. In collaboration with a line-up of globally renowned chefs, the airlines is trying to set a new standard for in-flight dining by bringing the finest international cuisine on board. The signature dishes, now being served on Qatar Airways flights, are brought to you by four celebrity chefs – Nobu (renowned for blending Japanese cuisine with South American), Ramzi Choueiri (an expert in Lebanese cuisine), Vineet Bhatia (bringing Indian exotica to the world) and Tom Aikens (known for his expertise in preparing European fare). Apparently, only the best in food – no Qatar given!



STAYING CONNECTED

Customers on select Air France-KLM flights will now have the advantage of staying connected even while they're flying. A tie-up with leading inflight mobile phone operator AeroMobile will allow passengers to send and receive text messages and emails, and browse the Internet, during the flight. The service is being launched in two sectors – a KLM flight from Amsterdam to Panama and an Air France flight from Paris Charles de Gaulle to New York JFK. Going a step further, AeroMobile is already in talks with over 220 mobile phone operators across 100 countries.

Wine & Dine

AT THE VERANDAH, GRAND HYATT GOA

With an architectural style of a 17th century Indo-Portuguese palace, The Verandah at Grand Hyatt Goa is a contemporary yet elegantly designed signature grill restaurant serving fresh market produce of seafood, meat and vegetables. Moreover, The Verandah plays host to some of the most exclusive Wine Dinners Goa has seen. Sip on a wine, while you are greeted by the cool breeze of the Bambolim bay.

With interesting pairings of food and wine and some of the world's most renowned communities like the La Chaine des Rotisseurs in attendance, The Verandah is a haven for food and wine enthusiasts alike. The restaurant exudes class and offers its guest a truly unique experience, with specialized menus created by a team of Grand Hyatt Goa's finest chefs.

The past few months Grand Hyatt Goa has played host to Spanish wine company; Torres wines pairing with authentic Indian cuisine. The pairing showcased the finest Torres wines blended with authentic Indian flavours brought out by a special menu crafted specifically for the event. Fratelli Wine Dinner was another exclusive affair with a delightful five course Mediterranean meal being paired with an exotic selection of Fratelli wines. South African Wine Dinner featured Sommelier Charles Withington who introduced a range of premium Niel Joubert wines. The virtues of modern French cuisine married with the finest wines from Delas and Selbach over a French Wine Dinner, with the perfect combination of the most creative dishes to complement the finest wines from the region.

Whether it's a glass of sparkling white wine or a glass of deep red, sip on a wine of your choice and sample the many savoury delights prepared by The Verandah chefs. The Verandah gives you a truly magical experience. With Satorri wine pairings just around the corner, we invite you to come be a part of the exquisite evenings in Grand Hyatt Goa's Wine Dinner series at The Verandah.

Goa University Road, Bambolim, North Goa.
For further information please contact: 0832 301 1125
Visit www.goa.grand.hyatt.com,www.facebook.com/grandhyattgoa

frequent flier

AIR TAXI

On your next jaunt to Sri Lanka, trade in your car hire for a stunning aerial introduction to the island country. The Sri Lankan Air Taxi is a thrilling new seaplane service that will transport you from Colombo to the hill country, all for a fee of ₹2,400. Operating between Colombo and the coastal towns of Galle and Tangalle, and the hill towns of Kandy and Nuwara, it's the perfect way to get around.

REDEFINING LUXURY

After two years of development and an investment of $150 million, Singapore Airlines has finally unveiled its 'next generation' cabins for the first, business and economy classes. Select flights between Singapore and London will be the first ones to benefit from the new seats and in-flight entertainment systems, starting September.

The new cabins promise more privacy and heightened comfort. ▲

First The length of the eight first-class seats/beds in each aircraft has been increased from 80 to 82 inches, and the improved entertainment system will now sport a 24-inch screen. Consequently, you get more privacy, increased comfort and attention to detail.
Business Will sport beds that are 28 inches wide and 78 inches long, with a reclining angle of 132 degrees. The 18-inch LCD screen comes with in-seat power supply.
Economy While Singapore Airlines has promised increased personal space and legroom, it refrained from revealing the exact new measurements.

APP CORNER

Saga

Free (Android, iOS)
By ARO, Inc.

Saga is an easy way to keep track of where you go and what you do, so you are not left filling in the blanks. The best part of this automatic life-logging app is that it requires little to no input from you. Just link the app to your social media accounts and live your life while it records and writes your digital autobiography.

EARN AND SHOP

Jet Airways' frequent flier programme JetPrivilege recently announced a slew of new partnerships, allowing members to earn miles through several lucrative tie-ups with brands in retail, travel and the publishing category. In retail, you can stand to gain by shopping from amongst 9,000 products of 300 beauty brands as well as 1,500 salons and spas under the Purplle.com umbrella. In fashion, a partnership with Chic Outlet Shopping gives members the perk of discounted prices, in addition to miles earned on every purchase. To get around, a car-hire from Wings Radio Cab will earn you miles, as will subscriptions to select magazines based in India. Win some, lose none.

H&S

creating customized craftsmanship

ELEGANCE IN CRAFTSMANSHIP. CUSTOMIZED.

At H&S, we have gone beyond making exceptional leather shoes, bags, belts, wallets etc., using the finest Leathers and accessories. We have pioneered in customization. Choose from H&S' signature collection to customize shoes for a great fit and personalize your favourite bag.

speed dates

6 & 7 Aug

LIVAROT CHEESE FAIR, NORMANDY, FRANCE

Love cheese? Then this annual festival is exactly what you may want to sink your teeth into. Located in the heart of Normandy's dairy region, Livarot hosts a festival devoted to cheese, including a competition to find who can swallow the most at one sitting. Livarot also produces its own cheese and hosts the Cheese Museum. This fair

includes the best local creamy cheeses as well as selections from further afield.

18 Aug

PEBBLE BEACH CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE, CALIFORNIA

About 200 of the most prized collector cars and motorcycles in the world roll onto what is often called the best finishing hole in golf – the Pebble Beach. Concours is a top-ranking vintage car collector show in the world. Petrolheads from all over the globe come together to compete, or simply enjoy the event here.

19-28 Aug

COPENHAGEN COOKING

Few other cities can boast of a gastronomic scene as dynamic as Copenhagen. The city's biannual food festival is equally revered. At Copenhagen Cooking, you sample the best of the new Nordic cuisine at slightly more democratic prices. The festival also encompasses a number of events, such as street stands and pop-up kitchens in the metro. A must-visit for the gourmand.

22-25 Aug

NEWPORT BUCKET REGATTA, RHODE ISLAND, US

One of the most eagerly anticipated events in the yachting calendar, the Newport Bucket Regatta brings together some of the largest sailing yachts in the world and pits them against each other in a wildly thrilling, fun-filled and hugely competitive two-day race. For entries and schedules, visit www.bucketregattas.com/newport

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The Alcohol Diaries

Many a mystery lies hidden in your glass of golden ale, and not everything you hear about it is true. Presenting six myths about alcohol that are better off dispelled.

Only time can remove traces of alcohol from your body ▲

Mixing drinks will make you tipsier

Alcohol is alcohol, whether you get it from beer, wine, hard liquor or a cocktail. Drunkenness does not depend on the accompanying compounds but the quantity of alcohol you drink. But don't get bottle-happy yet – mixing drinks could still cause a major stomach upset.

Alcohol has the same effect on everybody

There are many physical factors -- ranging from body weight, metabolism and body chemistry -- that affect a person's reaction to alcohol. Also, it has been scientifically proven that women get drunk faster than men. So, slow down, ladies!

A cold shower or a cup of coffee can sober you up

Time is the only factor that can remove alcohol from your body. A shower or a cup of coffee may prevent you from feeling sleepy, but they can't prepare you for the board meet ahead.

Beer is less intoxicating than other alcoholic beverages

Though beer has a lower percentage of alcohol than its harder counterparts such as whisky, rum or vodka, you are likely to get as intoxicated if you binge on it. And, weight-watchers beware! Beer has a higher calorie count.

Those who can "hold their liquor" stand a lower risk

Your ability to remain in control despite getting drunk does not mean that your body can handle alcohol better. It only shows that you have developed a tolerance for alcohol and are more likely to become dependent on it.

Eating a big meal before drinking will keep you sober

Drinking on a full stomach will only delay the absorption of alcohol into the bloodstream, not prevent it. Eating before you drink is not a defence against getting drunk – why don't you try kicking the bottle instead?

Mind your Head!

Tension at home and work wreaking havoc on your mental health? Here are seven ways to ensure that your brain remains energised, no matter how tough the going gets.

A change of scene

Occasionally, break the monotony of life by trying something different. You could do it by taking an alternative route to work, opting for a bus ride instead of the car, or asking your boss for tasks that are a little unlike the usual.

Dream on

Ensure that you get enough shut-eye to help you through your waking hours. Sleep facilitates a process called memory consolidation, ensuring that you remember and process things better when you are awake.

Work that brain

While technology makes life easier, it also impacts your mental prowess. So, the next time you want to add up the items on your grocery bill, push the calculator aside and make your brain do the calculating. Also, try Sudoku.

Eat right

Have more 'smart foods'. Studies on animals have found that blueberries are beneficial for the brain, while nuts are rich in vitamin E. Binge on oily fish, which contain omega-3 fats, and opt for olive and canola oil.

Coffee solution

Ignore the nay-sayers, enough evidence has cropped up over the years to suggest that coffee protects the brain. Two to four cups of coffee a day may stave off cognitive decline and decrease the incidence of Alzheimer's.

Goody gumdrops

There is a reason why sportspersons have a penchant for chewing gum. Studies have shown that chewing gum increases alertness, helps sustain attention and improves reaction time.

Fitbit Aria Smart Scale

THE FITBIT ARIA IS MORE than just another weighing scale! Unlike its counterparts, its function does not end with measuring your weight. It also calculates your body mass index and sends the statistics over to your Fitbit web account, besides monitoring physical fitness activities, food intake and sleep patterns. It supports up to eight users, and makes accurate weight-loss comparisons if programmed to do so.

Price: ₹13,668

MICRO WORKOUT Easy moves to strengthen your body

From Men's Health

HOW A SPOT OF MEDITATION CAN KEEP FLU AT BAY

Exercise makes it less likely you'll get a cold, but if you can't get to the gym, meditation can work nearly as well, a study by the University of Wisconsin has revealed. An eight-week programme of either exercise or mindfulness meditation nearly halved the duration of colds in the following eight months, compared to doing neither. Here's how the results break down.

▲ DOING NOTHING
A control group of 51 adults did no exercise or meditation for eight weeks. Most of them (40) got a cold in the following eight months and the average duration of the illness was 8.89 days.

▲ EXERCISE
A second group of 47 adults exercised (cardio and resistance) for 45 minutes every day for eight weeks. The following eight months saw only 26 of them get ill and their colds lasted 5.04 days.

▲ MEDITATION
A final group of 51 did mindfulness meditation (carefully thinking about tasks as they are performed) for 45 minutes a day. Only 27 got ill and they felt rotten for an average of only 5.13 days.

Fork that Deal

A few wrong moves over an important business lunch could spell the difference between bagging a deal and going home empty-handed.

TEXT BY JIMMY JACOB

A LOT CAN HAPPEN OVER LUNCH, INCLUDING DISASTER. You have planned lunch with a prospective client to ink a lucrative deal on a Saturday afternoon, but forgotten to tell your secretary to make restaurant reservations. When the call finally gets made a few days prior to the meeting, you discover that all the tables at your favourite restaurant are booked. Weekend rush, says a hotel staffer.

A series of frantic calls follows, and by the time you zero in on a decent restaurant with a free table, the client has already formed an opinion about your firm. Of course, it doesn't help when you arrive for lunch half an hour late (your animated apologies are brushed aside with tightlipped smiles), but it's only when you get a little too tipsy and accidentally trip over the client's suitcase that the deal appears well and truly lost.

Even in this age of Skype calls and business networking, face-to-face meetings are essential as far as the corporate world is concerned – especially when the matter relates to something of real significance. Many, especially old schoolers, are of the opinion that there is sense in discussing business the traditional way – through pleasantries exchanged over forks and knives.

Here are a few pointers for organising a successful business lunch with clients. While some of them may seem too basic, others are aimed at making you look professional enough to handle the deal at hand.

PLAY IT SAFE

While lunch with a client or potential business partner can be more productive than an office meeting, such an arrangement could backfire badly or (at least) cause embarrassment to all the entities concerned unless it is carefully planned. For example, try to find out if the guest has a packed schedule that day. In such circumstances, choosing a place with extremely slow service may end up forcing him to cancel his other appointments – evoking his displeasure in the process.

If possible, conduct some non-intrusive probing into the client's gastronomical preferences. You do not want to invite a vegetarian to a steakhouse, and such an occurrence is a big possibility in India where over 30% of the population swears by edible green. If that is not possible, it would be advisable to offer some options to the client and ask him to pick. That way, you absolve yourself of the responsibility of making a choice you could later come to regret, and also come out looking like you care about his or her preferences. And don't forget to compliment the guest on his choice, even if it's someplace you don't really like. Good manners go a long way.

TIME'S OF THE ESSENCE

Once the venue is chosen, you move on to a more important aspect of the event – preparing for it. Ideally, arrive at the establishment 30 minutes in advance and check if everything is in order. You do not want to end up looking incompetent because the restaurant staffers failed to get the numbers right. Even if your busy schedule does not allow that, do not – by any means – make the client wait for you. Remember, these are the people you plan to convince about your commitment levels –showing them that you can stick to deadlines. They would never believe you if you arrive late for a meet aimed at impressing them.

Okay, the impossible just happened, and you are 15 minutes late. Too bad, but all's not lost yet. Straighten your tie, apologise sincerely for being held up, and move on to other matters. Whatever you do, don't blame the traffic for your delay – your clients may not have arrived on a private jet either, and they wouldn't care much for clichéd excuses.

HOLD THE DRINK, AND POLL TALK

Lord Bacchus can be quite a tempter, but do not succumb to his charms when you are out trying to impress a client. Let the restaurant staffer fill your first glass, and nurse it while you advance into the conversation. Avoid getting drunk; it is likely to let both you and your firm down. There will be time enough to celebrate once the deal is done.

Let the client have his fill, though. The tipsier a client gets, the more attractive your terms and conditions will seem to him. Also, let your guest order first, so he doesn't feel inhibited by your choice.

Business discussions should ideally begin after the food and drinks have arrived. Till then, you may enquire about the client's well-being and the weather, and crack a few harmless jokes to lighten the mood. However, while doing that, it would be advisable to avoid touchy topics such as religion and politics. You don't want to annoy the client by disagreeing with his views on these matters – especially when it holds little relevance to the subject at hand.

THE RIGHT CALL

This is more of a general rule. People, especially clients, find it annoying when you spend half your time with them answering calls on your mobile phone – and it doesn't matter how important or busy it makes you look.

While your clients may be capable of understanding that you handle many more affairs than just theirs, they would greatly appreciate it if they can get your undivided attention in your little time together. Even if you can't afford to turn off the phone (you are probably expecting an important call just about then), be considerate enough to put it on vibration mode.

Ideally, one should arrive at the chosen restaurant 20 minutes in advance, and check if everything is in order.

etiquette

What the Fork!

You can't possibly make a good impression on your clients if you get your forks wrong. Here's how to fork it right.

Lobster fork

Lobster and crab forks have a very long handle, with two tines designed for pulling delicate crabmeat out of crab legs and shells. An oyster fork has a smaller handle, and has three tines instead of two.

Olive fork

This fork, on the other hand, has specially designed outward facing tines designed to grip olives without damaging them. While most olive forks have the three-pronged trident design, others only use two.

Fondue fork

These forks look like miniature versions of barbecue forks, with very long handles and delicate tines designed to grip the items as they are dipped into the fondue pot.

Fish fork

If you have decided to go big on sea food at any restaurant, look around for fish forks. These forks have three or four tines, all evenly spaced, besides a long handle to make it easier to work with fish.

Wooden chip fork

If fish and chips is on the menu, look for wooden chip forks. These forks generally have two tines and a rather short handle to make gripping the chips a whole lot easier.

While it's only proper to enjoy a glass of wine with the client, make sure that you don't end up getting drunk

THE BANE OF THE BILL

The luncheon's finally done and you have motioned to the waite to bring the bill along. He arrives five minutes later with a numbe that's likely to haunt your nightmares for years to come, and you first instinct is to clutch your chest in horror and protest agains the unfairness of it all. Well, don't. Chances are, even a shocke raising of the eyebrow can make the clients think that you are cheapskate who wouldn't bother investing any additiona capital into their project. Instead, pay your bill with the straight est face you can manage and resume the conversation. If yo think there is a horrible error in the calculations, politely excus yourself from the table and take the head waiter to the side where the matter can be discussed calmly, without causing un due discomfort to the client.

BUT, HEY! CHILL OUT

Now, you may be required to pussyfoot around a lot at busines lunches, but don't let that distract you from having a good tim While getting overtly casual with the clients may not be advis able, you should be free to adapt yourself to the situation at hanc Build a good rapport with your guests, and if they seem intereste in talking about broader topics, indulge them. If you have a goo sense of humour, let out a crack or two to lighten the mood (leav your book of rugby jokes at home, though). Clients may feel mor comfortable handing over the coveted contract if you come acros as somebody genial and approachable.

... AND YOU'RE SET

Get a hang of these guidelines, and you are probably halfwa down the road to bagging the contract already. Only halfway though; you still need to have a business offer capable of impres ing the client. Break a leg!

For Foodies...
... at Pride Hotels

Pride hotels are always banking to entice regional flavors to diners. Our team of excellent Chefs presents the most exciting culinary delights in all our food festivals like Jaipuri Rasoi, Dosa Mania, Baisakhi-Da-Mela, Sizzler Hungama to name a few being held at various Pride Hotels F&B outlets like,

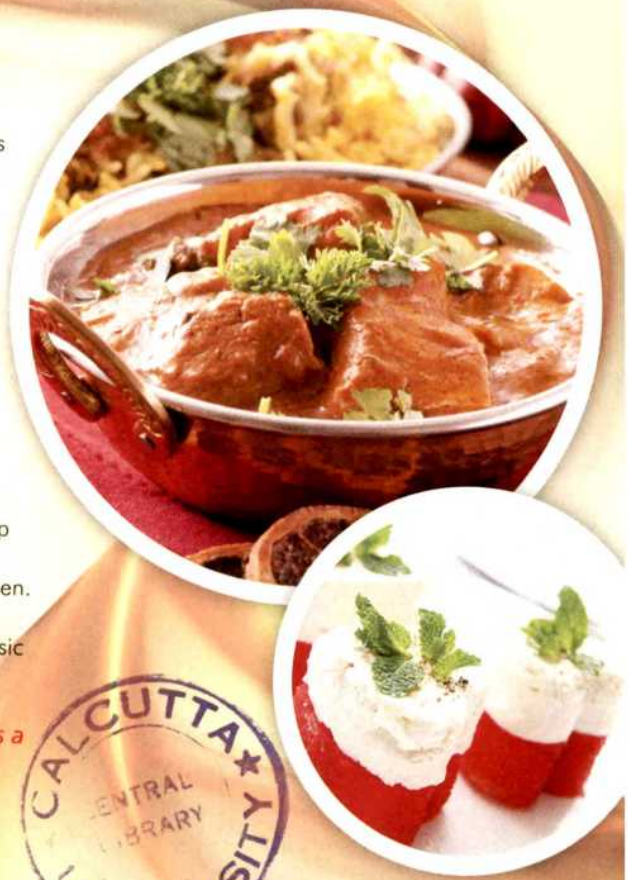
Café Treat: Our 24 hour swanky coffee shop. You can walk in at any time and relish sumptuous buffets all day long or chow-down late-night snacks. The setting here is simply spectacular: first, there is an impressive lighting to put you in good mood. And then a variety of seating arrangements casts an instant spell.

Turan-Da-Dhaba: Experience the Dhaba in its futuristic avtar with foot tapping live music with Sumptuous and mouth-watering Punjabi meal prepared by our master chefs

Casablanca: The most exhilarating restaurant you've ever been to, this avant-garde fine-dining facility will lift your spirits high with its unique ambience, heart warming music and above all else its mouth-watering flavors.

At Chennai, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Pune, etc. these festivals bring in lip smacking food and exotic cuisines from Indian and International kitchen. Apart from food there are also performances, dances and live music activities in the festival.

The Pride Hotels food festival is a feast for all the five senses.



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For more details visit: www.pridehotel.com

An enduring expression of efficiency and luxury

An enduring expression of efficiency and luxury, the all new WelcomHotel Dwarka, New Delhi offers the comfort of home in a delightfully distinctive ambience with the advantages of peerless location, facilities and services for both the leisure and business traveller.

In close proximity to both the Indira Gandhi International airport and the domestic airport, WelcomHotel Dwarka also offers easy access the city centers of New Delhi & Gurgaon .

The Hotel offers a range of accommodation across its 393 elegant, well equipped rooms and suites and brings with it the famed and formidable repertoire of two ITC Hotels' signature cuisines to the City.

K&K – Kebabs & Kurries offers an indulgent collection of the best quarmas, qaliyas and salans. A selection of popular dishes from Peshawri & Dum Pukht also feature on the menu to complete the K&K repertoire.

Serene dining experiences combine the best of culinary offering from China at the Shanghai Club. It offers a delicate balance between ying and yang ingredients to give an authentic meal experience.

In addition is Pavilion 75, the all day dining restaurant which serves the best of Indian and international cuisine.

The Hotel will see the re-opening of the legendary Ghungroo, a highly popular old favourite night club of the City, till the early 2000's.

The leisure proposition together with the cuisine offering and recreational facilities makes WelcomHotel Dwarka, an ideal getaway destination.

Hong Kong On a Plate

From brilliantly inventive Michelin-star restaurants to classic Cantonese cuisine, Hong Kong has a dining scene as vibrant as the city itself.

TEXT BY ANUSHREE BASU-BHALLA

GODZILLA SHOULD HAVE SKIPPED TOKYO. Hong Kong, as I found out, is a much better place to gobble through. With over 11,000 restaurants and an equally diverse cuisine, it would take nothing short of a giant lizard to fulfill the mammoth task of chomping through this city.

Hong Kong's culinary prowess is matched only by its status as the seat of capitalism – the crossroads where East meets West. Here, history and tradition sit cheek-by-jowl and the local palate is evolved and open to experimentation, given the city's colonial roots and cosmopolitan culture. Nevertheless, despite the omnipresent frenzy of commerce and culture, the place you usually find a Hongkonger at his communal and animated best is the locally revered noshing haunt. Food is personal here; it followed me through the city like the warm embrace of its subtropical weather.

Hong Kong climbed the food totem once it got the Michelin nod in 2008. Only the second city in Asia to get bragging rights over having 48 Michelin-starred restaurants. Things got even better when taxes on wine and beer were scrapped the same year, resulting in cheaper drinks. Right from the noodle soup station that dishes out heartwarming shrimp wontons at the business-class lounge of its slick international airport to the elegantly-plated braised goose at glassed-in restaurants, my visit to Hong Kong was framed by food.

So here's the big scoop on the most sought after dining destinations in the city. Dig in.

AMMO

This upclass restuarant is warm and welcoming; the food is simple yet delicious. But for its frills, its fare is surprisingly economical. It sits pretty in the new Asia Society Hong Kong Centre with décor that is inspired by *Alphaville* (a 1965 science fiction film noir directed by Jean-Luc Godard). Think shiny industrial-edged decor softened by the lush greenery outside. The six-metre floor-to-ceiling windows promise ample views of busy Hong Kong. The space gives off a semi-formal vibe and is recommended for a working lunch.

The Food
The angel hair with uni, burrata cheese ravioli with Peking duck ragu, and the spaghetti cacio e pepe are fabled menu champions. Also sample the slow-cooked egg with toro, uni and Roman zucchini sauce.

Meal for two
HKD 700 (without alcohol or taxes)

Address
Asia Society Hong Kong Center, 9 Justice Drive, Admiralty, Hong Kong. Tel: 2537 9888, ammo.com.hk

L'ATELIER DE JOEL ROBUCHON

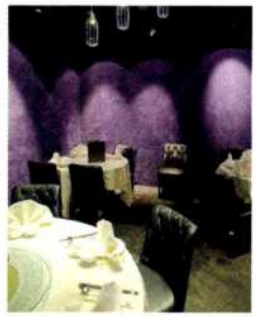
Drop by for its innovative French cuisine, served tapas-style. Securing a highly coveted seat in this two Michelin-star restaurant, helmed by master chef Joel Robuchon, is one of the most rewarding dining experiences in Hong Kong. The décor is contemporary chic, featuring plush red-velvet seating complemented by dark wood furniture. The restaurant has a circular bar enveloping an open kitchen, allowing customers to witness the process from pan to plate. The seating plan is divided into two areas – L'Atelier and Le Jardin. An elegant, formal atmosphere makes it a popular place to hold business lunches with clients.

The Food
Signature dishes include sea urchin in lobster jelly topped with cauliflower cream, crispy langoustine papillote with basil, and free-range quail with foie gras. This is served with creamy mashed potato.

Meal for two
HKD 1,000 (without alcohol or taxes)

Address
L'Atelier, Shop 401, The Landmark 4F, Central, Hong Kong. Tel: (852) 2166 9000

5 Top Tables in Hong Kong Worthy of a Culinary Stopover



Celebrity Cuisine

This Lan Kwai Fong 40-seat restaurant may sound rather star-struck but the menu at this two-star Michelin restaurant is truly fit for a celebrity. Minced beancurd fritters, fish head clay pot and pan-fried turnip cake are some of the most coveted dishes here. *1F Lan Kwai Fong Hotel, 3 Kau U Fong, Central, Hong Kong. Tel: 3650 0066.*

Otto e Mezzo - Bombana

Otto e Mezzo is the first Italian restaurant outside Italy to receive three Michelin stars. The signature dishes here are burrata cheese ravioli; marinated scampi with caviar and sea urchin, and veal chop Milanese with Sicilian tomatoes. *Shop 202, Landmark Alexandra, 18 Chater Road, Central Hong Kong. Tel: 2537 8859*

Bo Innovation

Fancy molecular gastronomy? Hop over to Bo Innovation. As its chef Alvin Leung puts it, this place is all about "x-treme Chinese cuisine". Sample the wobbly blob of ginger-infused pork soup; Chinese sausage; and rice ice cream, which are truly fit for a grourmand. *Shop 13, 2F, J Residence, 18 Ship Street, Wan Chai, Hong Kong. Tel: 2850 8371*

Gold by Harlan Goldstein

Gold is bold – whether in its colour scheme or larger-than-life culinary experience. The chef's signatures here are wild boar ragout tagliatelle with melting organic egg and shaved pecorino cheese, and slow-cooked Colorado lamb rib. This place hosts some of the best-dressed in Hong Kong. *Level 2, LKF Tower, 33 Wyndham Street, Lan Kwai Fong, Central, Hong Kong. Tel: 2869 9986.*

Caprice

The only French restaurant in town with three Michelin stars, Caprice is simply exquisite. Imagine dining amidst opulent gold decor, custom-made Swarovski crystal chandeliers, floor-to-ceiling windows with a spectacular vista of the Victoria Harbour. And then there is the delectable food to tuck into! *6F Four Seasons Hotel, 8 Finance Street, Central, Hong Kong. Tel: 3196 8888*

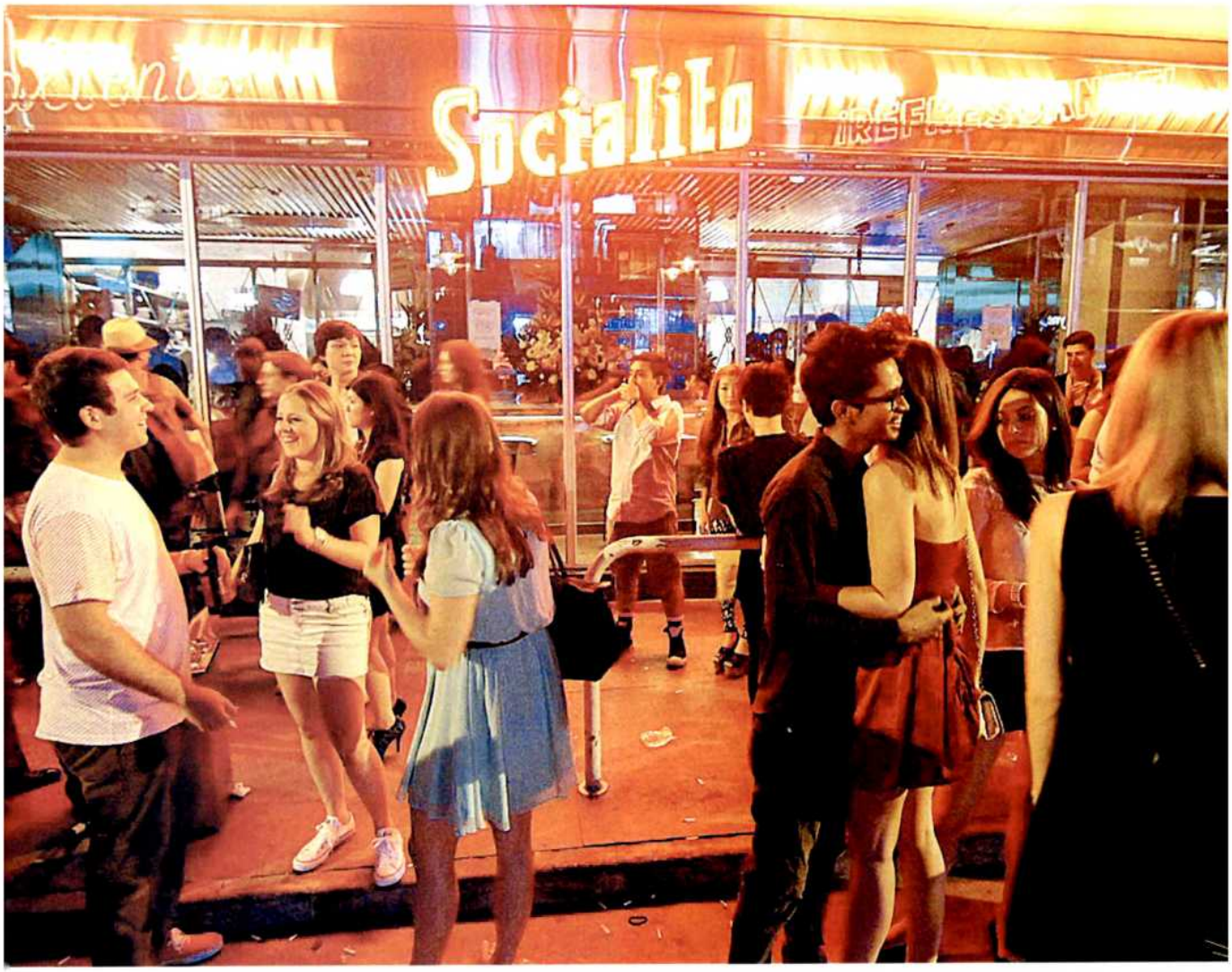
SOCIALITO

Got there for some off-duty fun at a buzzing neighbourhood of Wyndham Street. At Socialito, a lot of thought has gone into getting the details right. Busy and casual out front; cool and sophisticated in the restaurant-slash-nightclub at the back. Date-friendly? Check. Open until 2 am. No need for another late-night McDonald's binge after a long day of being in and out of meetings? Check.

The Food
The esquites - roasted corn tossed in anejo cheese, spicy mayo, lime and cilantro - are served off the cob in a little crockpot to keep the mess at bay. For a late night bite, you may opt for pork belly or swordfish tacos, seafood ceviche or pulled-pork tostada.

Meal for two HKD 300

Address G/F, The Centrium, 60 Wyndham Street, Central, Hong Kong. Tel: 3167 7380. www.socialito.com.hk.



THE SALTED PIG

The restaurant is known for its rib-sticking comfort food served in portions designed to be shared. The decor matches the warmth on the platter: think, a homely country kitchen, minus the oink-oink noises from the farms. Several long communal tables sit in the centre of the large dining room. There are booths, and single tables for smaller groups too. The food complements the rustic and cosy interiors: a place to roll up the shirt-sleeves and dig in some home-style food (just like my mamma's!). Also famous for delicious side orders and quick service, The Salted Pig is a good option for a quick bite en route to a meeting.

The Food
Pork is all the rage at The Salted Pig - picture the signature shredded pork-knuckle Memphis-style sandwich with tangy celeriac apple coleslaw or the stuffed pork tenderloin for mains. Not a pig fan? Then take a break from the boar with the signature green bean, broad bean and sweet-pea salad. In dessert, the pistachio mousse with macerated strawberries is to die for.

Meal for two HKD 300 (without alcohol or taxes)

Address 2/F, The L Place, 139 Queen's Road, Central Hong Kong. Tel: 2870 2323.

FEAST BEFORE YOU FLY

No longer is the frequent flier expected to live on cold sandwiches alone. Presenting six airport restaurants across the world that promise to make travelling a joy for the palate.

TEXT BY JIMMY JACOB

WHEN THE NEXT FLIGHT TO YOUR destination is two hours away, it may seem almost customary to munch on a greasy ham sandwich as you curl up on a couch at the airport waiting lounge. But, hark! The winds of change are blowing.

Waking up to the fact that frequent fliers – especially those from the corporate sector – end up spending a substantial amount of their time travelling, airports have started making space for gourmet joints and establishments offering a high-end dining experience. So, if you are a person who shuttles regularly from one point of the globe to the other, here are six airport restaurants that definitely deserve a place in your itinerary.

Nonya Kitchen (Changi, Singapore)

Kim Choo's Nonya Kitchen at Terminal 3 of Changi Airport is best known for its meat-filled rice dumplings, complete with coriander-flavoured minced pork and chopped wintermelon filling. With light wooden furniture and an easy-on-the-eye decor aimed at putting hassled fliers at ease, the restaurant also has other traditional Singaporean Nonya dishes, such as babi pongteh and beef rendang, on its menu.

Cuisine: Singaporean
Look out for: Nonya chicken curry, which goes best with steamed rice and bakwan kepiting (minced pork-prawn balls).
Net footprints: http://www.kimchoo.com/

Salt Lick (Austin-Bergstrom, TX)

Everybody with a weakness for barbecued meat must have heard of the Salt Lick, a restaurant situated in a sprawling ranch at Texas, located miles away from the hustle-bustle of the city. However, for busy corporates who do not have the time to head out into the wild every time they feel like a steak, there is a mini-Salt Lick experience at the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. The Salt Lick's award-winning BBQ is truly legendary, with their food being based on recipes for time-honoured American fare handed down from cook to cook since the Civil War, and patrons would agree that this is the closest one could get to Texas tradition in an eatery.

Cuisine: American
Look out for: Beef brisket, smoked pork tenderloin, moist smoked turkey and potato salad.
Net footprints: www.saltlickbbq.com

Dutch Kitchen Bar & Cocktails (Amsterdam)

The first thing to catch your eye at the Dutch Kitchen Bar & Cocktails restaurant would be its tea cup-shaped chairs and the communal 'Mad Tea Party' dining table. Figuring in the menu are select items from the traditional Dutch cuisine, including kroketten (croquettes on farmhouse bread), poffertjes (traditional Dutch pancakes), and organic burgers with kon ingshoeve beef. The bar, designed in collaboration with Lucas Bols BV – the oldest distilled spirit brand in the world, is also impressive.

Cuisine: Dutch
Look out for: The tea cup chairs; a drink called Amsterdammertje – made of bols jonge jenever, bols peach, cranberry juice and lemon juice.

App for Thought

Stuck in Brazil but longing for Chinese? These apps can guide you through foreign streets to the very eatery that your tummy's been grumbling for.

UrbanSpoon (Android/iOS)

A brilliant food-finding app on your cellphone, the main draw of the UrbanSpoon app is a randomiser that helps users find food within specific cuisines and locales. For the more conventional user, an inbuilt search feature offers a straight-forward approach to restaurant hunting.

OpenTable (Windows/ Android/ BB/iOS)

OpenTable is a free app that allows users to not only locate restaurants across the globe but also book tables directly from their phones. Though reservations can be made only at listed restaurants, you will never fall short of menu options and contact info once you have this baby installed on your phone.

Yelp (Android/iOS)

One of the first restaurant locator apps to make an appearance on phones, Yelp is populated with reviews from real people, giving the lowdown on all the eateries in the vicinity. The ability to write reviews directly on its boards, besides a facility to discuss eateries with friends online, adds to this app's universal appeal.

Altitude (Cointrin, Geneva)

Perched on the third floor of the Cointrin International Airport is Altitude, a restaurant run under the able stewardship of chef Fabien Legon. The seasonal menu at Altitude includes two and three-course set menus and a brilliant la carte menu. Dig into a hearty meal with a vantage point view of the Jura mountain range – which forms its backdrop.

Cuisine: French
Look out for: Duck breast and roasted foie gras with hibiscus; desserts like chocolate mille-feuille with orange confit.
Net footprints: http://www.altitude-geneva.ch

Porta Gaig (Barcelona)

Located in Terminal 1 of the Barcelona Airport, Porta Gaig gives you a taste of traditional Catalan cuisine without having to step out into the city. Rated number one in the list of best airport restaurants prepared by thedailymeal.com, the Michelin-star establishment sports a minimalistic décor and remains unmatched across various verticals – from service, taste and plating to presentation and innovative menu options.

Cuisine: Catalan
Look out for: Roasted prat chicken, coquettes and cod fritters, cod in samfaina and crispy Iberian pork.
Net footprints: www.restaurantgaig.com/en/

Crust (LaGuardia Airport, NY)

While Crust – as the name suggests – deals primarily with pizza, its menu has something for everybody. The pizza, according to patrons at the airport restaurant, is deliciously thin and chewy with a smoky, crispy crust that can be prepared only over a fire. Also in demand at the Crust are the Ceasar salad and meatballs – not too light, but filling enough to see you through a few hours in a food-less environment. However, be warned that the biggest grouse against Crust is the time it takes for the servers to bring the food along – a major disadvantage if you are looking for a quick bite before your next flight. Also, you have to place your order off an iPad.

Cuisine: Italian, Continental
Look out for: All kinds of pizza, and a wide range of beer.

Buy me a Drink

TEXT BY R PALLAVI

Drink your way to a good fortune. A guide to the science, commerce and emotions that run in whisky investing.

Luminous deep amber hues are the mark of a well-aged whisky

WAY BACK IN THE 12TH CENTURY, when monarchs and armoured knights were still crossing swords over titles and honour in medieval Europe, an unnamed distiller accidentally left a concoction of malted barley in the dampness of his basement. Years passed before the man revisited the underground cabin, but when he finally did make his way through the door, it was to discover a sweet golden-hued liquid that delivered a veritable punch when consumed. Aqua vitae, the distiller decided to call it, which roughly translates to "water of life" in English.

Now, this is just one of the many theories surrounding a question that remains hidden under the sands of time. Truth be told – nobody really knows much about the origin of whisky, or why it was dubbed aqua vitae when the first written record of the liquor pertains to an Irish chieftain drinking himself to an ironic death on the Christmas of 1405.

Today, whisky has become a joy for connoisseurs and an investment option that's rapidly gaining ground. And even the most rabid alcohol-hater would agree that the very thought of a simple grain of barley turning into a precious spirit upon being condensed, fermented, malted and aged seems tinged with the most divine of magic.

The 'single malt' is called so because it is the product of just one distillery, and unlike blended whisky – which is mixed with mass-produced grain whiskies – it is in a pure form. One can gauge the worth of a single malt through its rise in demand, which effectively amps up the price. The first quarter of 2013 witnessed a sale of 3,789 bottles from the Highland area, a 34.5 per cent increase over 2012's sale of 2,818 bottles. And this is an ongoing trend. While sales stood at 8,696 in 2011, it rose by 62.7 per cent in 2012 to a whopping 14,150. Sales of the top 1,000 most exclusive whiskies increased by 23.27 per cent last year, a phenomenon that suggests an overall growth of 123 per cent in the last five years. Malts are aged in limited batches for a minimum of three years, and distilleries in the famed regions of Speyside, Highland and Islay manage a little over 100.

The Whisky Highland Index, which provides a detailed distillery investment picture for collectors and investors, suggests that the top 250 whiskies cost £48,125 in 2008. This went up to £134,740 by 2011 – an increase of 179.79 per cent. In 2008, the top 100 were priced at £25,030, and in 2011, this figure shot up by 244.75 per cent and touched £86,280. The top 10 whiskies, on the other hand, stood at £6,500 and hit £32,600 by 2011, an increase of 401.54 per cent.

The same index also compares gold with whisky. In recent years, the value of the precious metal has risen 146 per cent over the same period, and diamonds by just 10 per cent. And, compared to the gains accrued by some other stocks and commodities, whisky returns seem more attractive. Not to mention how darn good it tastes. Andy Simpson, founder of Whisky Highland, feels, "Some of the rare and limited bottlings from top performing distilleries like Dalmore and Macallan are achieving eye-watering returns at auctions, outperforming most other forms of alternative assets... It won't be long before whisky is viewed in the same light as art, wine or classic cars."

Whisky investment is slightly more complicated than going to a liquor shop and picking up anything that catches your fancy. The infallible modus operandi is to chase limited edition releases from prized labels like Glenlivet, Macallan, Balvenie and Dalmore, or surviving bottles from distilleries no longer in operation such as Rosebank and Mortlach.

David Robertson, Rare Whisky Director at Whyte & Mackay, says, "The demand for rare and limited-edition whiskies is exceptional, and it's a trend that is set to continue in line with the uplift in other luxury goods markets. We are going to see more distilleries and brands release very special whiskies designed to meet the growing demand from luxury consumers."

Since buyers make investments at the start of a long-drawn ageing process, they need to keep the spirit alive in its literal entirety. Sandeep Arora, the director of Spiritual Luxury Living, has invested in a Bruichladdich cask. "The appreciation in casks will be much higher than bottles in the future," he says.

Buying a cask lets you sample the spirit as it matures, and you can check whether its peaty notes match your taste before deciding to bottle it.

For skeptics, there are two reassuring details. First, the entry price point can range anywhere between £50 per bottle to £100,000 per bottle; second, it has a longer shelf life, and is much easier to store than vintage wine. And even if the whisky fails to get you the returns you desire, it will make that tulip-shaped glass acquire a crimson glow, giving you a taste of the good life. In for a peg, in for a pint.

In Rare View

Whisky expert Sandeep Arora lists out rare breeds that are worth their weight in gold, becoming a sure-fire way of making a fortune.

The Balvenie 17YO
It is aged traditionally, and introduced to heavily pleated casks for a final period of maturation. It has a light buttery and subtle spicy finish.

The Millburn 18 YO
It has a honeyed sweetness with a hint of dust and coffee. The otherwise smooth malt has an unexpected peaty burn to it and gets smokier and leathery after a swig or two.

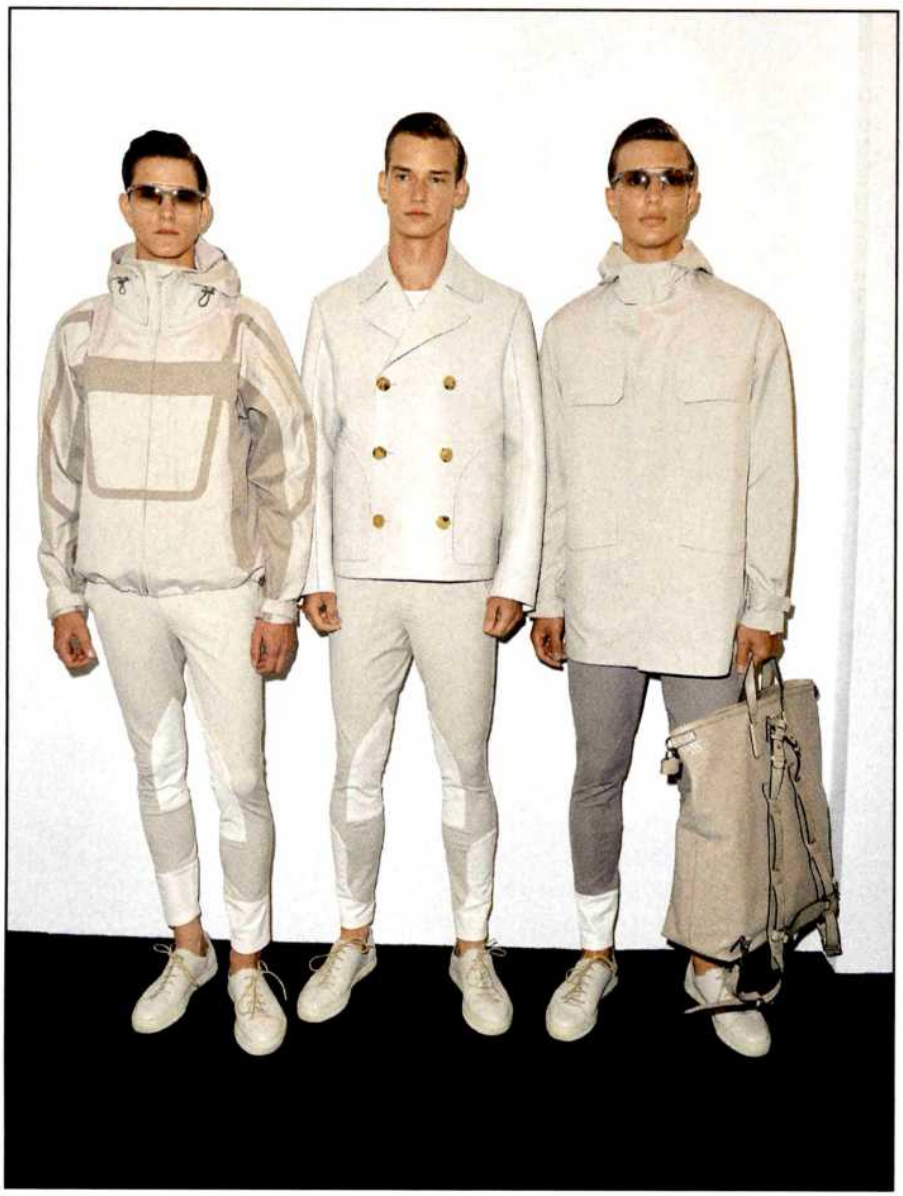
Macallan 1966
In the whisky world, the speyside is the right side! This beauty is a rich alliance of cloves, ginger, fig-jam and burnt toffee. On your palate, it's a Dundee cake bursting with almonds and piquant currants.

Macallan Glenlivit
Distilled in 1938, the whisky is aged in sherry wood casks – giving it a warm, zesty flavour with overtones of oak. Its deep gold contours open up with multiple sprays of water.

Ramp it up

It's a man's world at Gucci this season as the iconic brand launches a men only store in Milan ahead of the men's fashion week where it showcases its Spring/ Summer 2014 look.

TEXT BY PRACHI BHUCHAR



THERE ARE AS MANY PEOPLE outside the venue as inside, but that probably has something to do with actor James Franco's presence at the show. Light glints off shiny black squares on the floor, clashing with brittle flashbulbs that go off on cue every few seconds as photographers zero in on the next big fashion flash.

The carpet covering the ramp is rolled off to prepare for the big show – Gucci's Summer/ Spring 2014 collection, which is debuting at the Men's Fashion Week in Milan. All the fashion soothsayers have lined up to see what creative director Frida Giannini will give the world of nips and tucks this time, just a day after the House launched its first men's flagship store for Europe at Milan's hip Brera district.

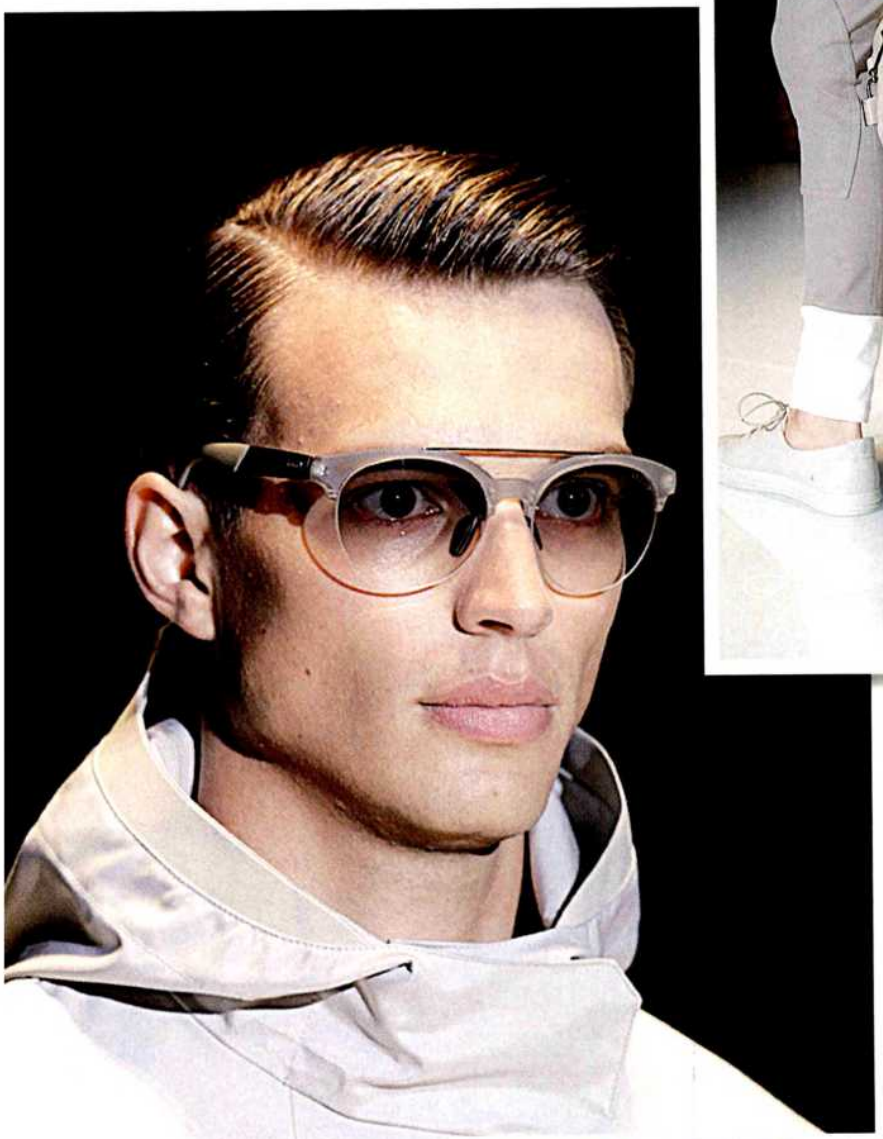
The store features a dedicated area for the brand's prized Made to Measure programme: a personalised, sartorial offering for the modern day man. It is also the first to offer Giannini and designer Lapo Elkann's capsule collection.

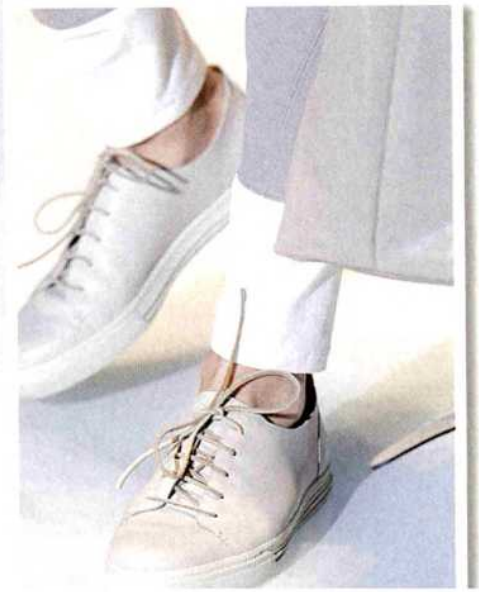
As the sound of champagne glasses clinking fades into the dusk, the House works itself up into a frenzy in anticipation of the all-important show the following day. And even as it gets underway at the appointed hour, the collection turns out to be a sweet reminder of Gucci's sartorial strength and the man it chooses to design for.

A look at our top picks from Gucci's new collection.

Floral Fantasy

A number of top fashion brands seem to have embraced flower power for Spring/ Summer 2014 and Gucci tops the list. In keeping with its floral fixation over decades, the men's collection evokes nostalgia and romance and calls for some summer loving! While many of the prints are originals culled from Gucci's archives, they have been given a fresh spin by creative director Frida Gianinni, who reinterprets the almost feminine motif in this collection. From blazers and T-shirts to jumpsuits and regular jackets, a hint of flower power dominated the runway at their show.





Trim in Leather

Straying from its regular classic cuts and formal looks, Gucci experimented with a sport-goes-sexy look as part of its summer/spring 2012 collection. This four-pocket white-hooded anorak with cuffs that had lapels across them was created from an almost space-age kind of fabric: neoprene. The muted shades served as a direct foil to the bright florals that formed a key part of the collection, and the cut was boxy rather than sleek. The anorak was paired with a pair of colour blocked leggings met with a classic pair of lace-up shoes with rubber soles. Leather accents featured in a big way across the collection.

Accessorise This

The Gucci man has always epitomised sensuality, romance and finesse. However, this collection went a step further in creating a well-rounded Gucci man who enjoys the outdoors in style. Moving away from the greys, beiges and florals, there were bursts of sunshine on the ramp as Gianinni gave us a canary yellow windbreaker. The emphasis, though, was on the accessories that completed the ensemble, like a sporty timepiece, black laced-up shoes and the ubiquitous leather bag. The classic weekend bag was amped up to become an oversized backpack that could also be carried as a tote or a regular man bag.

Suit Yourself

The men's summer/spring 2014 collection also saw a strong emphasis on getting the silhouette right. Gucci resorted to what it calls techno-tailoring. If you look at the conventional three-piece suit that the brand is known for, this time round it is given a facelift by using novel materials. Think, suit made of techno-stretch jersey and nylon cotton but cut with the same sartorial finesse that the brand has always taken pride in. On the runway, the well-tailored shirt under the suit jacket that is beautiful yet basic was replaced by the t-shirt, giving the suit a funk upgrade. Wear it with a demure shirt during the day or replace it with a stretch cotton or printed silk tee for a wicked night out. Formal wear was deconstructed to suit the new age man and while colour tones stayed largely in the ice white, beige, caramel zone, these were interspersed with a burst of whimsy when it came to florals, polka dots and printed silks.

top shop

Bally Briefcase

This textured-leather briefcase encapsulates the luxurious detailing of the Swiss brand and the pin-sharp aesthetic of the business world. Flawlessly dapper, the sleek piece contains two internal sleeves and multiple pockets for quick and easy organisation through the working day.

Price: On request

TAG Heuer Carrera Calibre Limited Edition

Monaco Grand Prix is arguably the final word in high-octane and haute living. As an ode to the partnership of precision between Tag Heuer and the racing legacy, this chronograph adds Monaco magic to the Tag Heuer Carrera legend. It features a limited edition dynamic black rubber strap, replicating the F1 1964 tyre tread, and red "Monaco Grand Prix" lettering on the bezel tachymetre scale and on the case back, with the Monaco Grand Prix logo. To make it a truly one-of-a-kind collector's item, the case also has your own "Limited Edition" number.

Price: On request

Bose Quiet-comfort 20i

Hate the sound of traffic while listening to your favourite music at the end of the day? These in-ear noise-cancelling earphones from Bose let you choose between blocking out your surroundings or letting it in, all while enjoying your music on the go.

Price: ₹22,388

Ralph Lauren Henley Centrepiece Bowl

This elegant Henley Centerpiece Bowl by Ralph Lauren is crafted in glass with an equestrian-inspired leather trim, making it a unique accent for a well-appointed living space. Available online on www.ralphlauren.co.uk.

Price: £1,695 (₹1.53 lakh approx)

Montegrappa Snake

The Chinese Zodiac deems the Snake as intelligent and graceful. As an ode to 2013, the year of the snake, Montegrappa's Snake is a rare collector's item. The limited edition writing instrument comes decorated with a stunning die-cast overlay, and is available in sterling silver and solid 18-carat gold.

Price: $2600 (₹1.50 lakh approx)

Vertu's Signatire Zirconium

If there ever was a phone created for suave businessmen, it would be the Signature Zirconium by luxury cellphone makers Vertu. The rare material used for the body, zirconium, comes together with sapphire glass crystal and interfaces USB, Bluetooth and Wi-Fi as well as WAP and GPRS. Now, that's form and function in one.

Price: $21,000 (₹12.13 lakh approx)

IDUS Kandinsky Coffee Table

Inspired by modern minimalism and function, this IDUS coffee table boasts of a strong and commanding design that enlivens your living or commercial space instantly. While the angular wood base provides stability, the glass tabletop renders fluidity to the edgy design – the perfect little addition to your spacious corner office.

Price: ₹35,000 onwards

Fendi Frames

Add a little spunk to your off-duty hours with these funky frames by Fendi that come in a classic square shape, finished with light, mottled-brown tortoiseshell frames. A pinch of crimson on the sides, and you're ready to transform your prescription lenses into high-impact cool.

Price: On request

Razer Edge Pro

Here's one for the boy in every man. The all-new Razer Edge Pro gaming tablet is a rare device that reimagines the gaming experience and delivers something that's not just different, but better. The tablet's ergonomic and innovative design, combined with powerful components such as an Intel Core i7 processor and Nvidia mobile graphics card, make it a real game changer.

Price: $1,499 (₹83,730 approx)

Corneliani Ties

This Italian designer, renowned for his deft use of fabrics, uses hard-working chambray to dapper effect with these flawless ties. Done in a subtle palette, they go well with a crisp shirt and unstructured blazer.

Price: On request

Louis Vuitton Thong Slipper

These brightly-hued thong slippers feature Louis Vuitton-embossed straps and come with a comfortable Damier pattern insock. As the ribbed rubber soles withstand chlorine and salt water, slip them on by the pool or when you hit the surf on vacation.

Price: On request

...under Thai

Neung Roi brings you the best of Thai cuisine on a platter. BY VIVAN MEHRA

MY APPETITE FOR EXOTIC FOOD TAKES ME to restaurants with names that are more than just a mouthful. Neung Roi, the fairly new Thai restaurant at Radisson Blu Plaza, Mahipalpur, thankfully saved me the trouble of dealing with yet another tongue twister.

Done up in muted gold and brown, nothing about the restaurant's understated elegance prepares you for the feast that follows. In keeping with the trend of making technology part of your dining experience, the menu is served up on an iPad which sports an exhaustive list of dishes inspired by culinary specialties from the four major regions of Thailand. On offer is an array of spicy delicacies from Isan, hot-and-salty dishes from Lanna, sea food and fresh produce from the south, and the mild-but-balanced cuisine from the central plains.

The most difficult part of the Neung Roi experience is deciding what to order. Once that task is dealt with, you can spend your time waiting for the food by browsing through the iPad, which is stocked with information on the various food regions of Thailand.

Pla muk yang
Thod man khau

Meal for two
(alcohol extra)
₹2,800

Radisson Blu Plaza,
Mahipalpur

011-26779191
(Extn: 649)

Like the opening scene of a movie, the first dish to hit the table set the tone for the rest of the meal. And as beginnings go, this one was pretty solid. I began with pla muk yang (charcoaled squid) followed by goong som (prawn soup in coconut milk). The thod man khau (corn fritters with chilli), a light and airy dish, is highly recommended for vegetarians. Given the wide range on offer, ask your server for suggestions. I ordered the nun phad prik (stir fried tenderloin) and the famous Thai green curry. Accompanying it were pad Thai noodles flavoured with just the right amount of condiments.

The only disappointment in the menu was the dessert section, which was quite limited. What did we pick? Sticky rice and mango, followed by a tamarind sorbet. Though the former was quite good, my Indian palate couldn't take the idea of having rice for dessert. The sweet-and-sour sorbet, however, turned out to be the perfect ending to a sumptuous Thai dinner.

VIVAN MEHRA

Delhi

The most difficult part of the Neung Roi experience is deciding what to order ▲

Vicinia is a good place to spend a relaxed afternoon with your laptop ▲
The desserts come almost as a relief ▶

Potluck Point

Vicinia looks like a postcard Wi-Fi restaurant, but its fare is nothing to rave about. BY SHAGUN LUTHRA

AT A FAIRLY BUSY INTERSECTION ON KEMPS Corner stands Vicinia, a new eatery that promises patrons a complete European cafe experience. Here, you can look at the street outside and enjoy your meal while watching the world zip by.

After relaxing and admiring the large black-and-white "slices of Mumbai life" displayed on the walls, we began by asking the server what he would recommend for starters. We were greeted by a puzzled look. "Huh?"

Taken aback, we ordered a quinoa and arugula salad and a seafood broth. The food came quickly enough – the salad was crunchy and light, and the flavour only got better when we drizzled it with a lime and vinaigrette dressing. Though the seafood broth had generous chunks of fish, squid, prawn and clams, it really could have done with some seasoning. But we wished we hadn't complained back then; it eventually turned out to be the best part of our Vicinia experience.

For mains, we ordered braised chicken breast and pan fried rawas. And even as we waited, the place started filling up with women out to pick their children from school. Thirty minutes ticked by. "The food will take five more minutes coming," said the waiter.

An exaggeration, one might say. It was about an hour and a half later that the food finally arrived, and it took us a little less than a minute to realise that the Vicinia ordeal was far from over. Not only was the fish not fresh, it was also undercooked. The tough-as-hide chicken breast, on the other hand, had been unceremoniously dumped on a bed of mashed potatoes.

Vicinia seems to suffer from gross neglect. The staff has not been trained to make recommendations, the service is sloppy, and somebody in the kitchen isn't giving the food the love it deserves. On the upside, it has a great selection of imported beers. So, if you want to spend an afternoon sipping your beer leisurely at an eatery with free Wi-Fi, Vicinia could be the right place for you. Just stay away from the food.

Quinoa and arugula salad

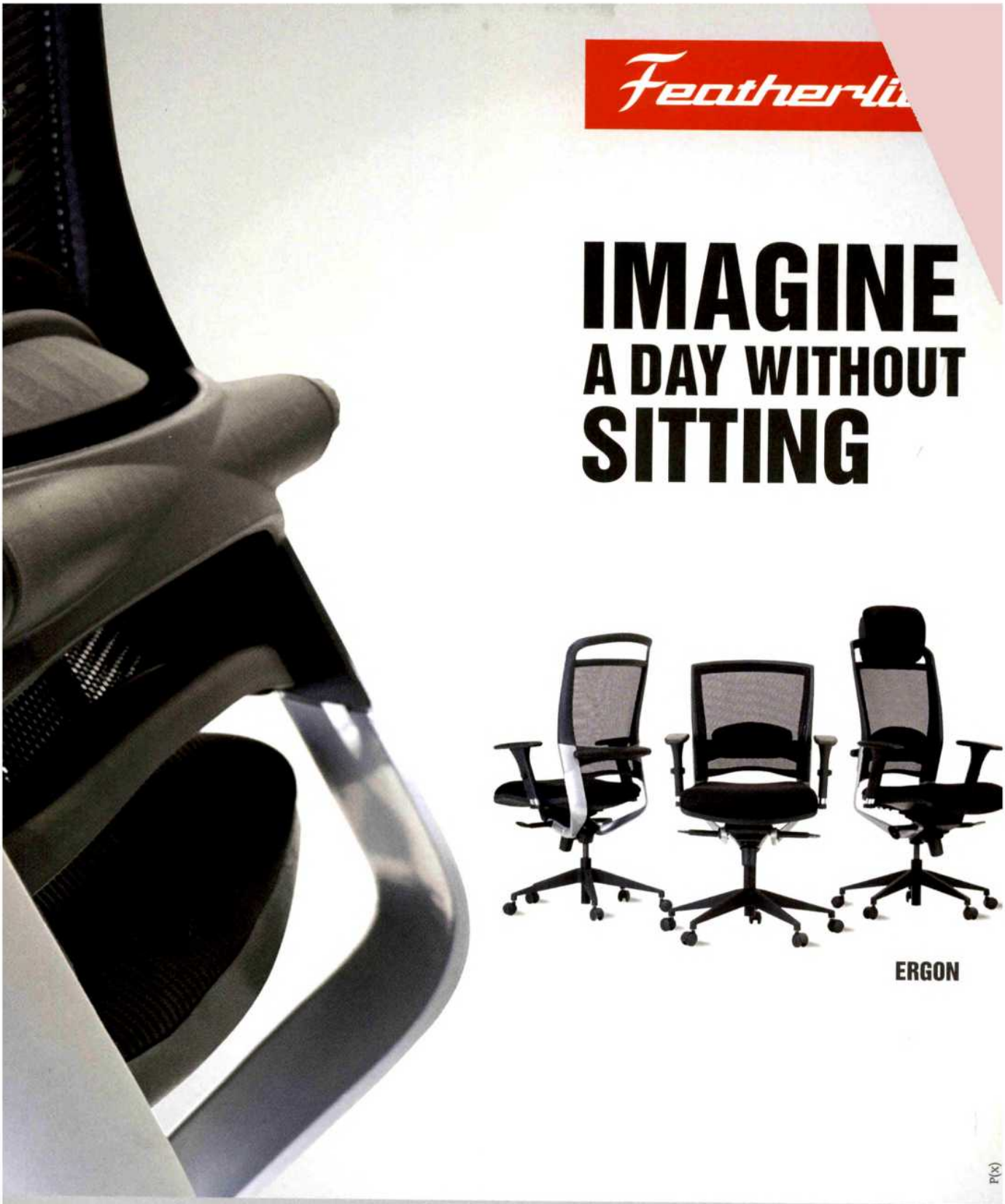
Meal for two (alcohol extra)
₹1,600

Kemps Corner, South Mumbai

(91) 9821302348

Need For Speed

CRAFTED AND CURATED TO TECHNICAL FINESSE BY SWISS MANUFACTURER KOENIGSEGG, the Agera has been named the hypercar of the year. This twin-door vehicle has a removable roof top that's stowed under the front hood lid. If aerodynamics rule the exterior, the gleaming LED symbols, HD interface controls and leather-trim upholstery make up the enviable interiors. The mean machine has a work rate of 927 bhp at 6,900 rpm and a peak-rated torque of 810 lb-ft at 4,000 rpm. For $165,000 plus import duties, you can drive to work in this beauty.



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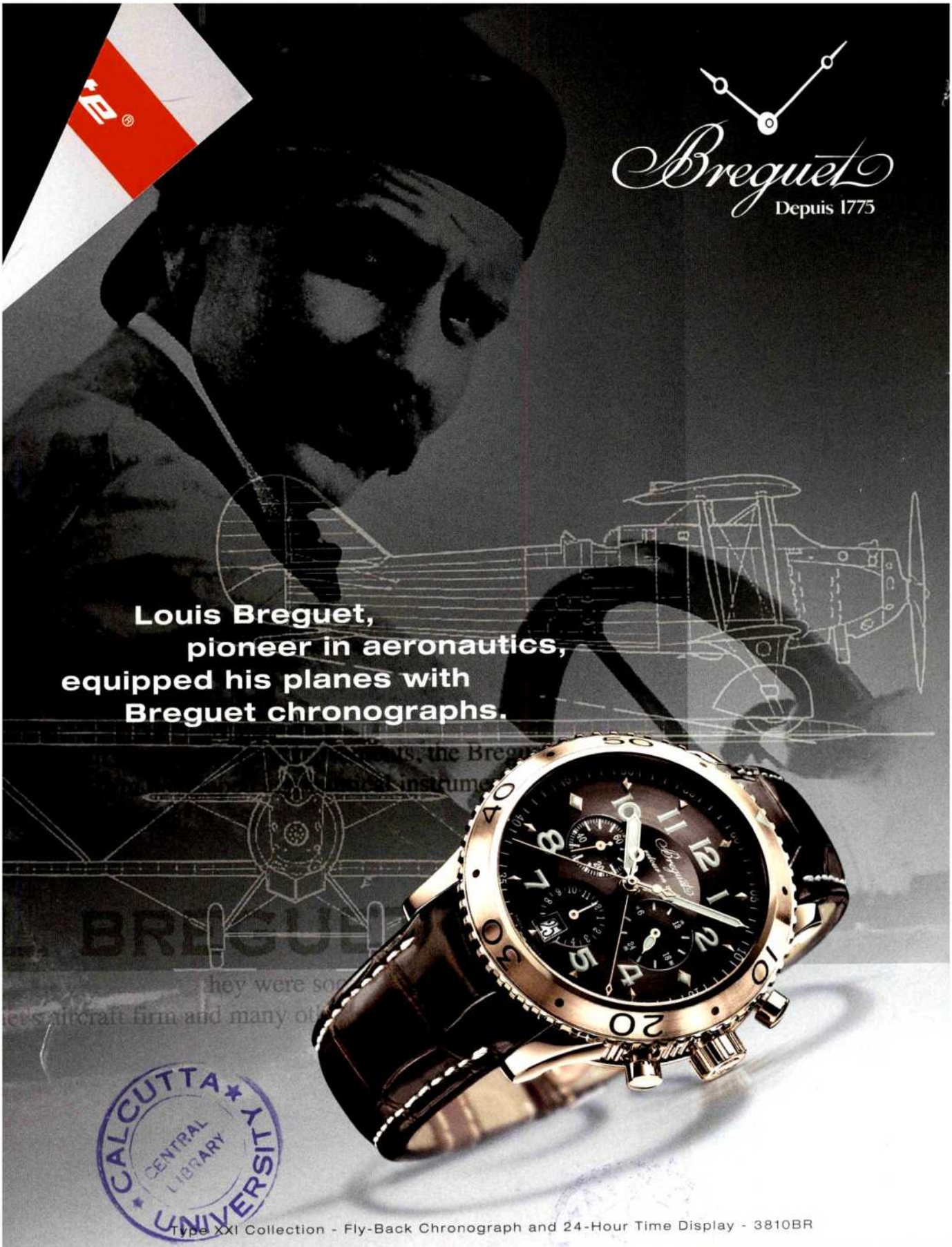

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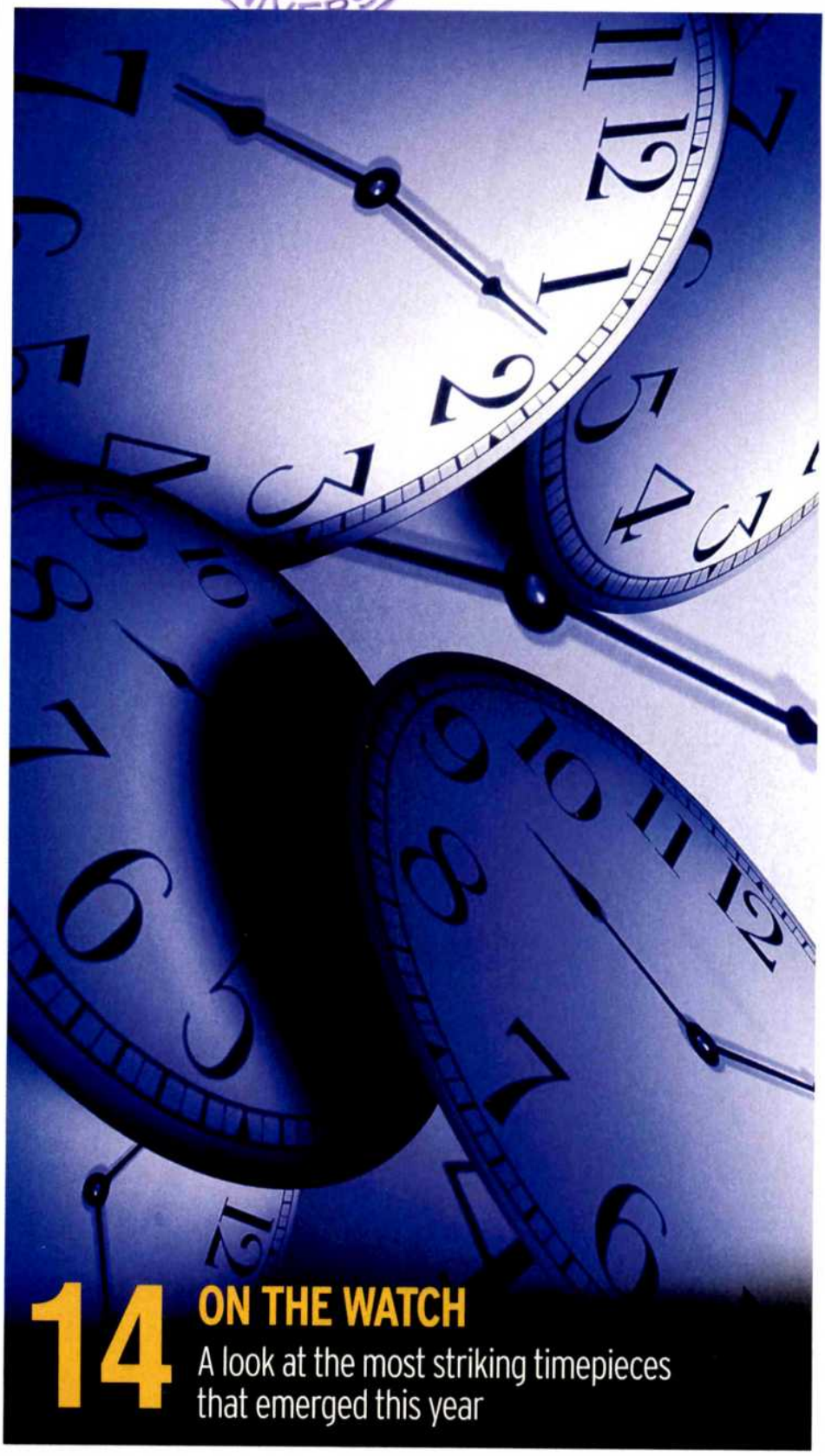

14 ON THE WATCH
A look at the most striking timepieces that emerged this year

INDIA TODAY GROUP

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ON THE COVER

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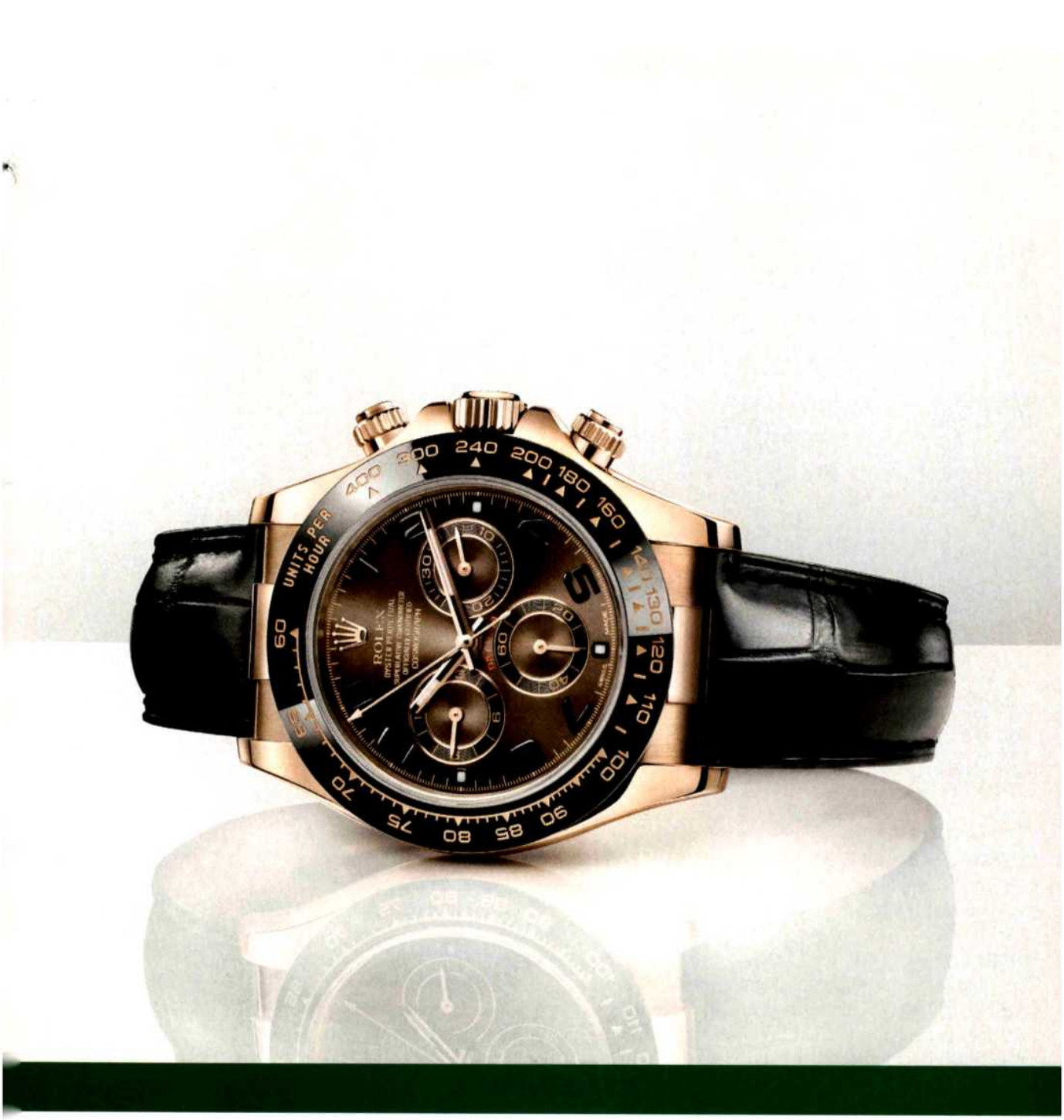

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ROLEX

Pick 'em Right

Want to buy a laptop but can't find the right one? Some tips from Shishir Singh, Director, Product Marketing, Dell India.

For basic multitasking, choose an Intel core i3 processor over dual core ▲

BUYING THE RIGHT KIND OF LAPTOP IS DICTATED BY HOW YOU PLAN TO use it. Shishir Singh, an expert at gauging market requirements for personal computers, speaks on getting all the specifications right — so you land just the instrument you need.

HOME

You could opt for a laptop with a Pentium dual core processor, but if you tend to multi-task, a core i3 would be a better option. If the computer is for a student (your son or daughter) who plans to do basic project work, a standard 500 GB hard drive should suffice. A movie or music hoarder, however, may do well to settle for storage space of at least 1 TB. We recommend 4GB RAM, and screen sizes of 12, 13 or 14 inches.

OFFICE

For official use, your best bet would be a laptop with a core i3 processor, or a core i5 processor, and 500 GB of hard disk space for storing Excel sheets and Word documents. The ideal screen size would be 14 inches, but you could opt for a lighter laptop with a 13-inch screen if you travel frequently. A 4 GB RAM should suffice.

MEDIA

A person who handles media-related work such as photo or video editing should opt for a core i5 processor, if not an i7. For storing videos or high-resolution photographs, his laptop should have at least 1 TB of storage space. A 6 GB or 8 GB RAM would be required to run 'heavy' editing software. Go for a graphic card like NVIDIA GeForce.

GAMING

A heavy-duty gamer would need a laptop with an i7 (Quad core) processor, a RAM of 6 to 8 GB, an NVIDIA GeForce (2GB) graphic card and a laptop screen that measures 17-18 inches. They could also opt for a BlueRay optical drive and a 1-1.5 TB hard disk drive.

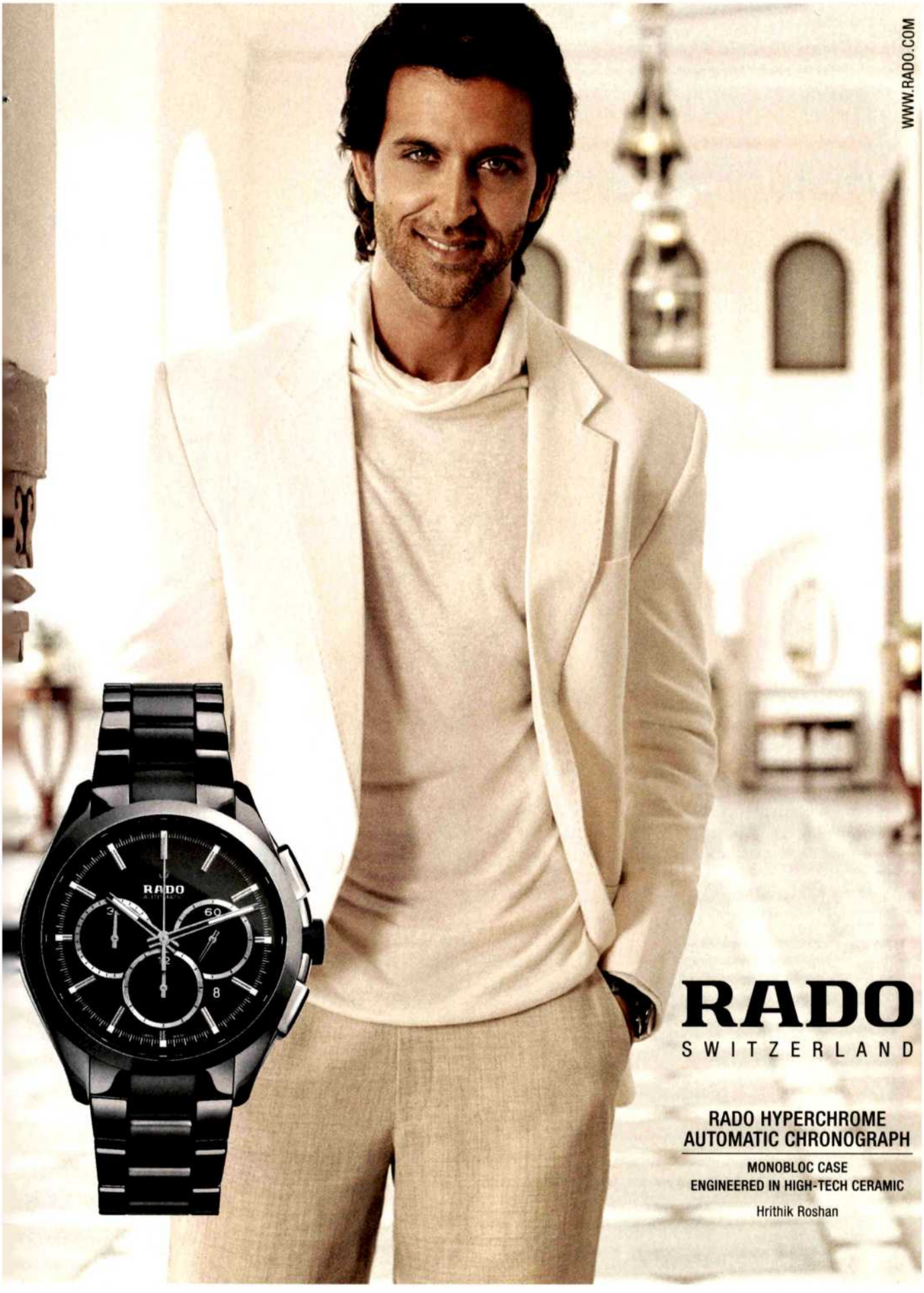
4 android security apps

Lookout Security
Lookout ensures that your handset is malware, spyware and Trojan-free. It also lets you back up data stored on your phone, and locate it through GPS in case of loss or theft. App is free

AVG Anti-Virus
This app is best known for guarding against phishers, blocking malicious sites and killing tasks that slow down the device. App is free

NQ Security Premium
Besides the usual security functions, NQ Mobile Security Premium boasts of automatic virus database updates, spyware alerts, online banking protection, locking a lost or stolen phone, and activating an alarm remotely. Price: ₹1,190

McAfee Mobile Security
Besides the more conventional tasks, this app backs up data, checks apps against McAfee's TrustedSource URL reputation database, filters unwanted calls and texts. Price: ₹1,790



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Turn your iPhone into a Wi-Fi hotspot

Find out if the hotspot option is included in your mobile plan. If yes, open up the personal hotspot menu by clicking on 'Settings', followed by 'General Network'.

Toggle on the 'Personal Hotspot' option. Set up a new password or keep the randomly generated one given to you by Apple, which happens to be safe enough.

Your iPhone should now start broadcasting a Wi-Fi signal. Go to your computer or laptop and view all the wireless connections. Select 'iPhone'.

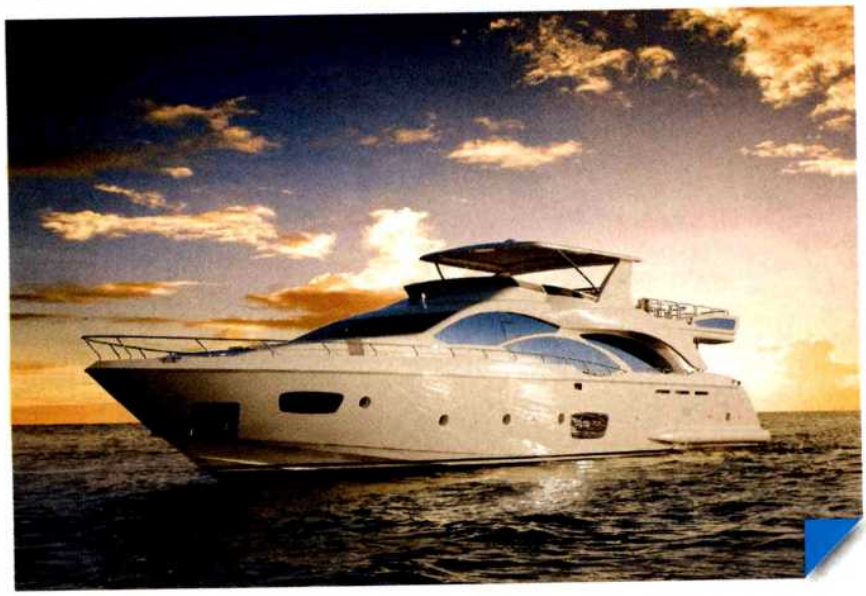
Following this, the computer will prompt you to enter the network security key. Type in the chosen password, click OK, and hey, your iPhone's now a Wi-Fi hotspot!

Yacht's the Good Word

TAKING A CUE FROM BUSINESS baron Vijay Mallya, who owns the 95-metre Indian Empress, many among the Indian elite have decided to splurge on yachts over the last five years. In fact, as many as 200 yachts have been sold in the country during this period. Some tips on yacht-anchoring etiquette.

COMING IN

Entering an anchorage or a mooring area is a lot like moving into a new neighbourhood. Even if there's no particular stipulation to do so, enter at a speed that's less than five knots. This will ensure that you do not rock the other boats, annoying their occupants.



POSITION IT RIGHT

Try to position your yacht in a place that's least likely to come in the path of other boats — even if it amounts to a certain degree of inconvenience. Also, keep away from potential party boats (you never know what they have been drinking), or ones that have noisy wind generators. Believe us, the last thing you need is a nasty bump on your yacht.

DON'T BE A BOAT MAGNET

For some reason, an already-anchored yacht always seems to make other boats park right next to it -- even if there is an enormous bay stretching out. Try not to follow this trend, and if you have anchored first, politely ask the next boat to give you some space.

BUOY YOUR ANCHOR

In a crowded anchorage, it's a good idea to place a floating marker on your anchor so that everybody knows where it is. There's nothing worse than tangled anchors, particularly when you have to make a hasty departure.

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PARIS SIZZLING

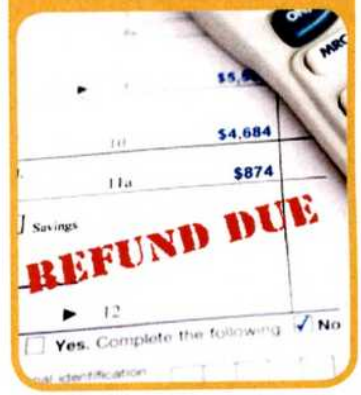
The French capital trumps Madrid, Venice, Rio de Janeiro, London and New Delhi to occupy the hot seat of tourism.

As many as 83 million foreign tourists visited France in 2012 ▲

WHEN IT COMES TO TOURIST DESTINATIONS, THERE IS NO BEATING THE City of Love. Even as France retained its position as the world's top tourist destination with over 83 million foreign visitors visiting it in 2012, Paris turned out to be the envy of every other touristy city in the world. Europeans continued to make up the bulk of visitors, accounting for more than 83 per cent of tourists to Paris. The number of European visitors to France went up by 2.1 per cent in 2012, while the number of Asian tourists grew at a rate of 9.9 per cent. The other cities that figure in the list of top international cities for travel are Madrid (Spain), Rio De Janeiro (Brazil), London (UK), Venice (Italy) and Delhi. Meanwhile, a survey by luxury travel magazine Virtuoso Life has revealed that Australia, Italy, New Zealand, Ireland and France are the top "dream destinations" among those who show little hesitation in loosening their purse strings, especially when it involves having a good time.

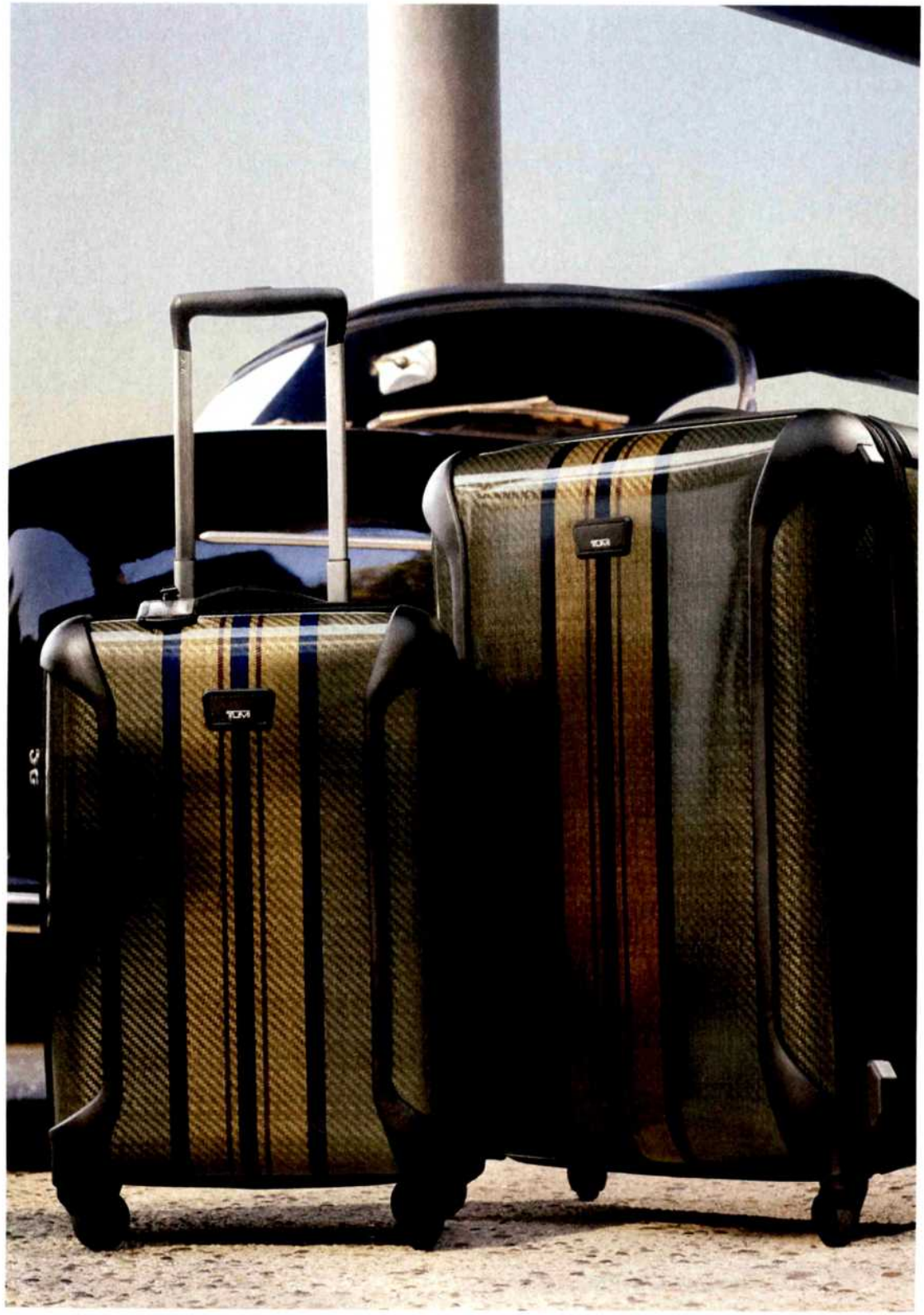
REFUNDS SANS RED TAPE

Airlines can no longer take you for a ride. Indian travellers will now benefit from refund.me, an online platform specialising in handling claims for passengers pertaining to airlines and other modes of transportation. The website promises swift and efficient solutions to air passengers hit by flight delays, cancellations, diversions and missed connections. This assumes significance in the light of the fact that in 2012, as many as 1.7 million passengers had failed to exercise their right to compensation – allowing the airline industry to garner approximately ₹3,120 crore. The customer is required to pay a 25% commission (plus VAT) only if the claim is settled successfully. Now, how's that for a winner?



ANOTHER FEATHER IN ASIA'S CAP

If fliers across 160 countries are to be believed, the friendliest and most efficient flight attendants in the world are found on Asian airlines. The conclusion was made through customer satisfaction surveys where respondents were asked to rate their favourite airline cabin crew. Topping the Skytrax World Airline Awards category of best cabin staff was Hong Kong's flagship carrier Cathay Pacific, which took the No 1 spot from flight attendants of erstwhile winners Malaysia Airlines. Eight of the 10 top airlines with the best cabin crew hailed from Asia – EVA Air, Asiana Airlines, Singapore Airlines, ANA, Garuda Indonesia, Qatar Airways, Hainan Airlines and Thai Airways.



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LUXURY ON WINGS

Sparing no effort to ensure that its passengers travel in the lap of luxury, international airline Emirates has come up with a new executive service that will accommodate up to 19 of its most elite passengers in an exclusive private Airbus A319. The plush-looking Emirates Executive aircraft will be equipped with a highly configurable dining and work lounge, ten first-class sleeping suites and a premium shower spa.

HAVE FOOD, WILL FLY

Now, here's the foodie's ultimate dream come true, provided he has £182,000 to spare. Luxury travel websites veryfirstto.com and holidaysplease.co.uk have come up with a holiday package that lets epicureans and gourmands explore every three-Michelin-star restaurant across the world over a period of six months. Considering that the Michelin guides award three stars to restaurants that offer only the most exceptional fine-dining

The Le Louis XV restaurant at Hôtel de Paris in Monte Carlo will feature in the package. ▲

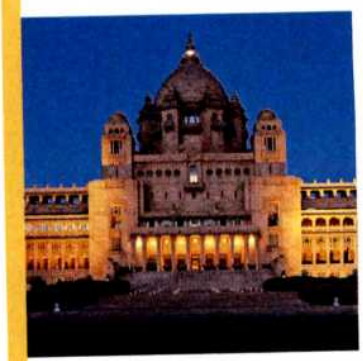
experiences, just 109 venues will find themselves in the package itinerary. Spread across 12 countries, people embarking on the tour will have to visit one restaurant every second day in order to fulfill the tour requirements. While Tokyo alone has 15 three-Michelin-star restaurants, the other destinations will include New York – with establishments such as Jean Georges and Thomas Keller's Per Se – and Paris, which hosts the grand Epicure restaurant at the Le Bristol.

APP CORNER

TravelSafe Pro

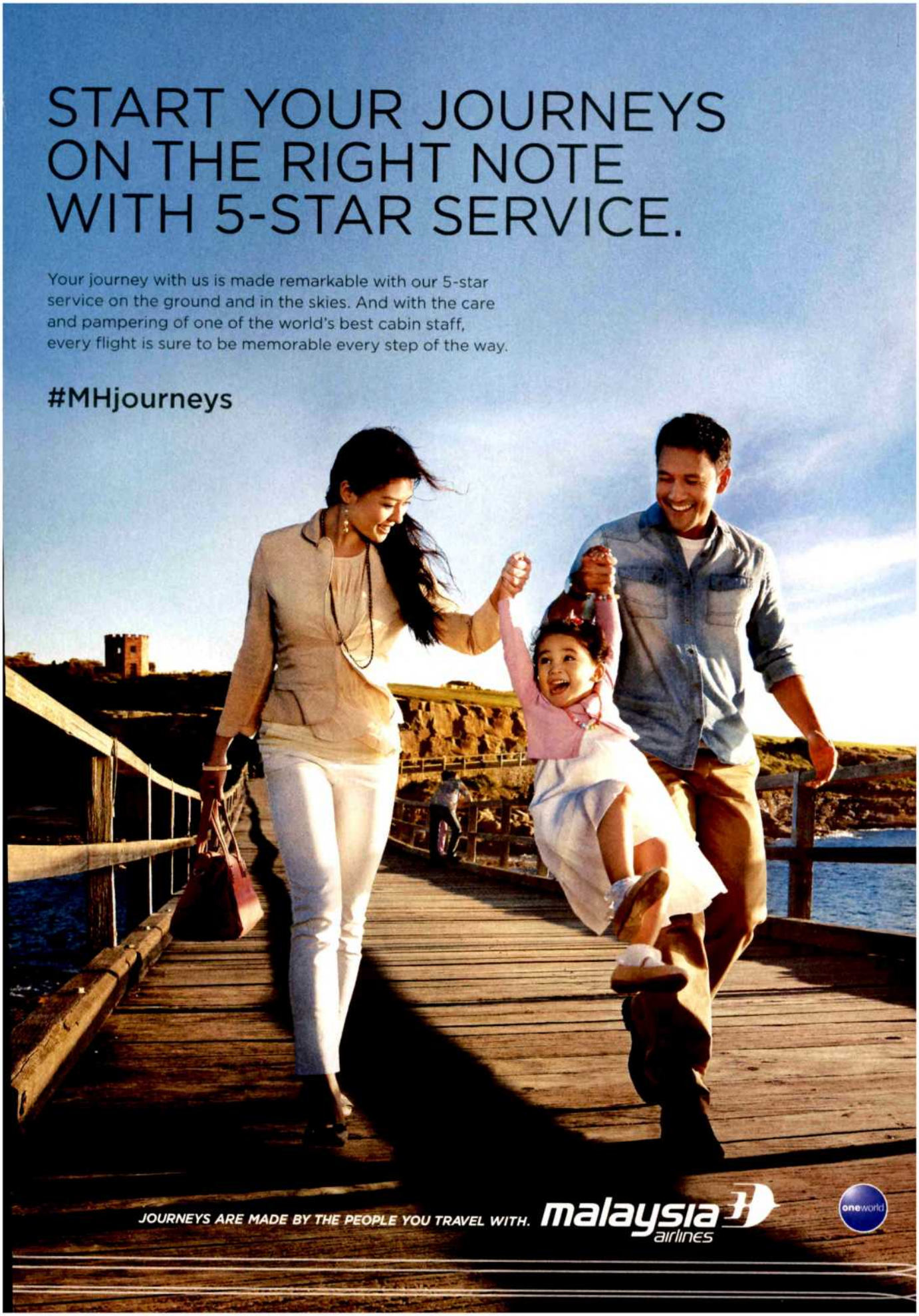
₹69.21 (Android)
By BoaLogik.

TravelSafe Pro is a database of emergency service numbers for just about every country you may visit. Also, there are embassy details, should your passport go missing, and – for the faint of heart and the truly paranoid – one-touch access to the police and ambulances.



RETREAT INTO ROYALTY

With its 'Royal Retreats' package, the Taj Group of Hotels offers the international tourist as well as the globetrotting businessman a taste of bespoke hospitality fit for monarchs. The package offers them the chance to stay at some of the most enchanting palaces in India, including the Taj Lake Palace in Udaipur, which seems like a bejewelled lotus afloat on the shimmering waters of Lake Pichola; Rambagh Palace in Jaipur, an architectural masterpiece that transcends time; the Umaid Bhawan Palace in Jodhpur (in pic), the world's largest private residence; and the Taj Falaknuma Palace in Hyderabad. Live life kingsize!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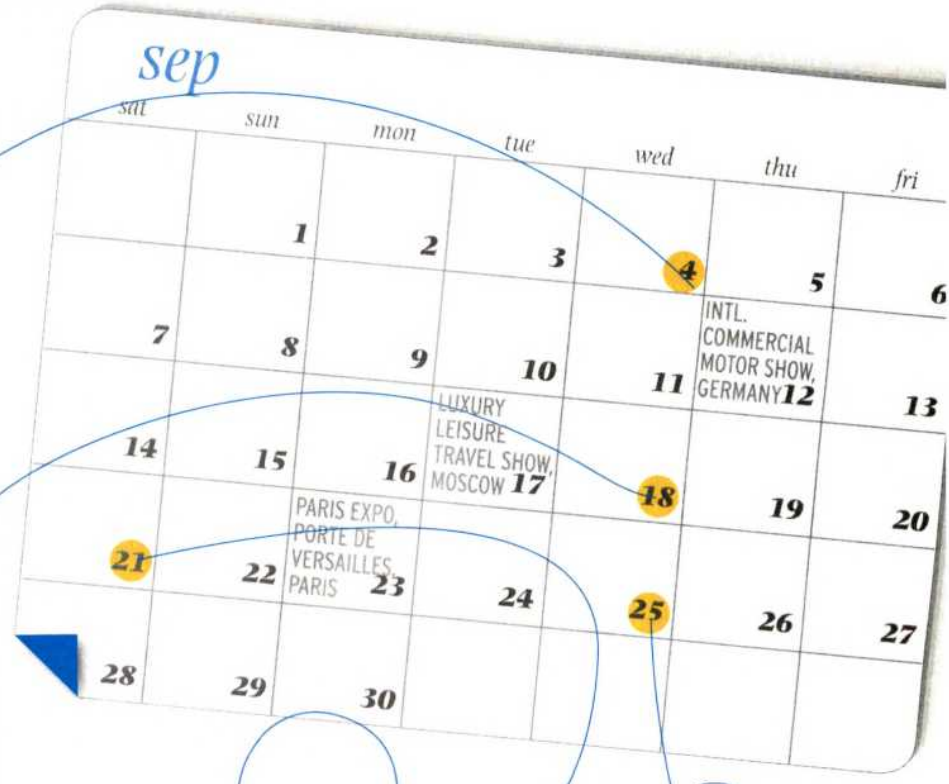


4 - 6 Sept

SALON PRIVÉ VINTAGE CAR EXHIBITION, SYON PARK, UK

Arguably the world's most unique 'boutique' motoring event, Salon Privé brings together the wonder of the British Super Car Show and the Concours d'Elégance. It is an exhibition of the very finest automotive brands and their rarest and most valuable classic cars and motorcycles. Salon Privé is for discerning

guests and collectors who prefer a more intimate and engaging experience. More info at salonprivelondon.com.

18 Sept

ANTIQUORUM - MODERN & VINTAGE TIMEPIECES EXHIBITION, GENEVA

Established in Geneva in 1974, Antiquorum is an auction event for the world's rarest and most expensive vintage timepieces. A perpetually innovative source for collectors of haute horlogerie, the event has cultivated a thriving ecosystem for showcasing vintage timepieces worldwide. For schedules and info regarding watches on exhibition, visit www.antiquorum.com.

20 & 21 Sept

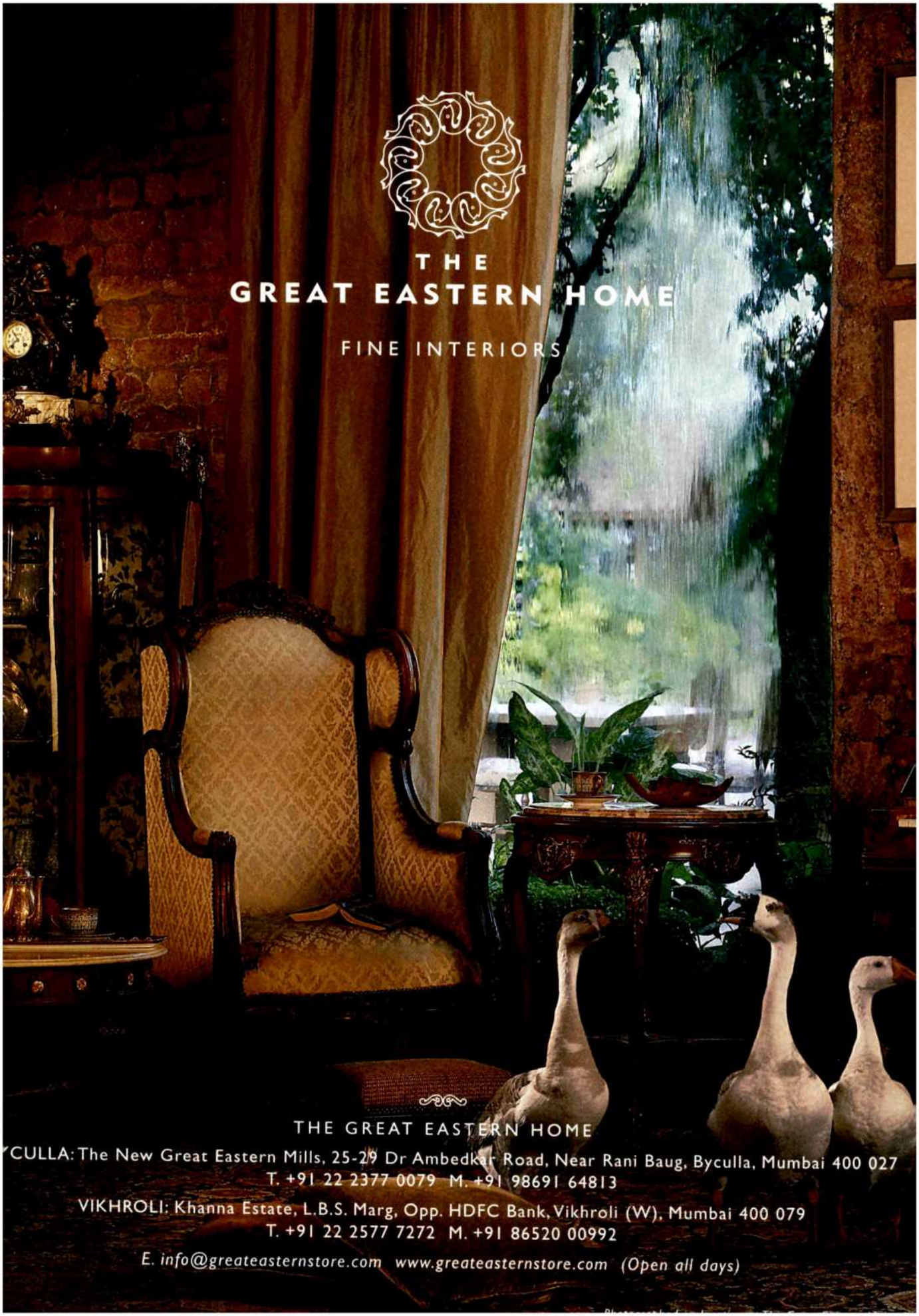
WINE RIOT, NYC

Sure, wine can seem complicated, but in the end it all comes down to whether you like it or not. Wine Riot is your all-access pass to hundreds of new wines, sans the snobbery. Held in New York, it is an informal wine fest that entails wine tastings, talk shows, and discovering new favourites among 250 wines from around the globe. For tickets and timings, visit secondglass.com/wineriot/new-york-2013/tickets.

25-28 Sept

MONACO YACHT SHOW

The Monaco Yacht Show – held annually in September at Port Hercules – brings together professionals from the international luxury yachting sector. The only event across the globe that is exclusively devoted to super yachts, it has the largest floating luxury yacht display in Europe. Visit www. monacoyachtshow2013. com for more information on the show.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As Time Goes By

The wristwatch has come a long way from being a simple device that tells you the time. A look at the most elegant, accurate and complicated timepieces that emerged this year.

TEXT BY ANUSHREE BASU-BHALLA AND JIMMY JACOB

"Time is an illusion."

When Albert Einstein famously said this in the early part of the 20th century, a hundred million wristwatches across the world must have ticked away in a chorus of mechanical disagreement. Truth is, time is important, and so are the devices that showcase it.

In the watchmaking world, trends change with each movement of the scrawny seconds hand. BaselWorld 2013, this year's edition of the world's largest watch and jewellery fair, saw blue becoming the favoured colour for watch dials. Another trend that seemed at odds with the splendor of exotic timepieces was the use of denim, with Hublot and Guess unveiling denim dials that are informal but elegant. Regular straps could also be seen getting the cold shoulder, with bi-metal ones – especially the rose gold-and-steel version – finding expression in many a timepiece.

Breguet literally serenaded timepiece connoisseurs with a device that played Bach's Badinerie even as its diamond-studded dial rotated to life, creating a stunning spectacle of shimmering colours. While Blancpain dominated the complications arena with an elegant red-gold device that associated Carrousel and Repetition Minutes complications with a flyback chronograph. Breitling – through its stunningly orange Emergency II – demonstrated how a wristwatch can facilitate survival as efficiently as it tells the time.

BaselWorld 2013 went to show that personal timepieces have come a long way from the 1550 Nuremberg egg, with dozens of complex applications finding their way into a dial that once accommodated a single hour hand. We bring you the best from the world of watches.

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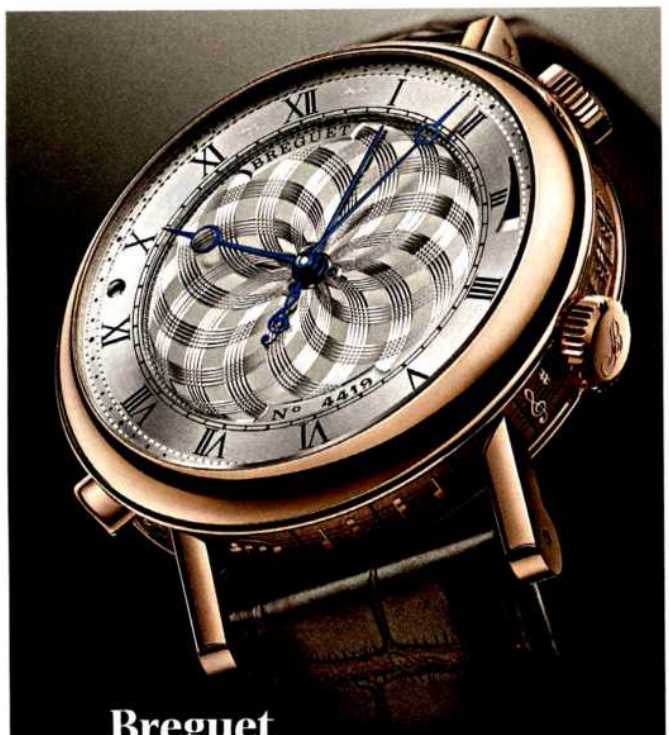
Timeless Elegance

These classic timepieces, with their clean lines and minimalist precision, are like fragments of history that have remained unscathed through time.



Breguet

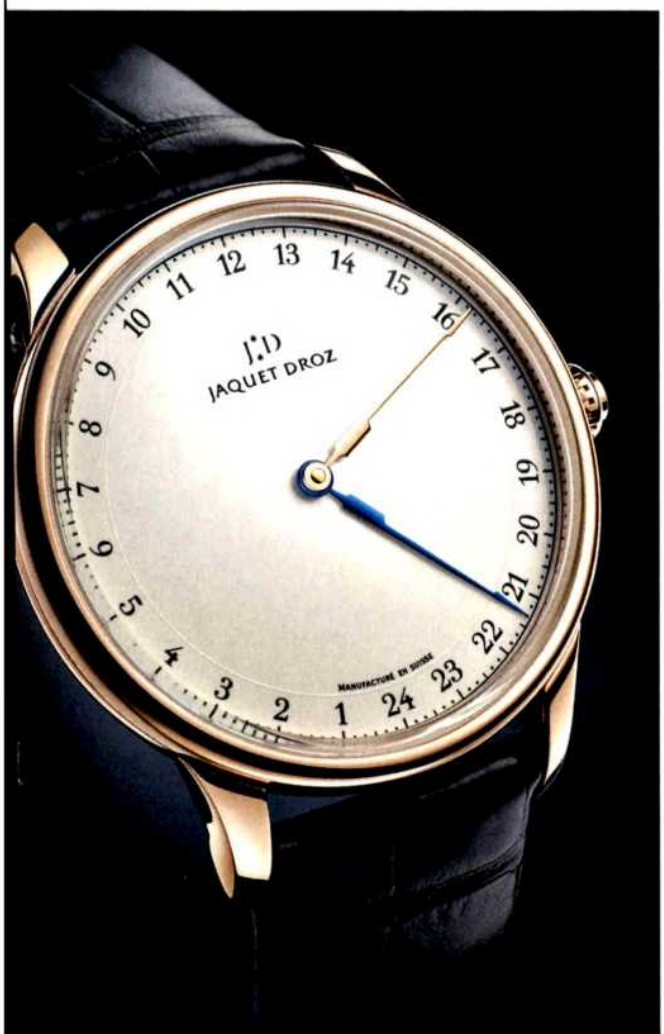
CLASSIQUE LA MUSICALE 7800

Breguet calls this piece a 'music box' on the wrist. A small button, located at the 10 o'clock position, controls the musical complication. When the button is pressed, or when the watch strikes the scheduled time, it plays Bach's Badinerie, which is the final movement of his orchestral suite N°2 in B minor. An indicator positioned between 9 and 10 o'clock shows when the melody is playing. All this is set in the stunning backdrop of hand-polished diamonds to refract light at different angles. When the music plays, the dial comes alive, rotating and creating a stunning spectacle of shimmering colours. Apart from this extraordinary aural pleasure, the timepiece shows the hours, minutes and seconds in the centre, with a power-reserve indicator at 3 o'clock.

Panerai

RADIOMIR 1940 ORO ROSSO-42 MM

Vintage looks are a hot trend this year and Panerai is no exception. Case in point: The new Radiomir 1940 Oro Rosso 42mm Special Edition. The iconic timepiece's classic dimensions are replicated in the 42 mm diameter, polished, rose-gold case of the Radiomir 1940 Oro Rosso (Italian for "red gold"). The brown dial with Arabic numerals contrasts beautifully with the rose-gold case and echoes the colour of the brown alligator strap. Like all Radiomir dials, it uses Panerai's signature 'sandwich' construction, with two thin plates surrounding a layer of Super-LumiNova.



Jaquet Droz

GRANDE HEURE GMT

Minimalist and precious, the Grande Heure GMT is a tribute to travel. This unusual timepiece is ideally suited to long-distance voyagers and modern-day aesthetes. The 24 Arabic numerals that circle the Grand Feu enamel dial trace each moment of the day in two separate locations. This innovative display is enhanced by the two hands in a compass-like formation. The red-gold hand shows the local time whereas the blue-hued steel hand proclaims the time in the wearer's country of choice. By opting for the unconventional system of a single crown to adjust both hands, Jaquet Droz has succeeded in making the Grande Heure GMT an embodiment of simplicity.

Bulgari

OCTO STEEL

The Octo range by Bulgari has upheld iconic watchmaker Gerald Genta's name over the years, and the marquee has now launched its latest version of Octo, showcasing many hallmarks of its creator's design style albeit with a few modern twists. Available in stainless steel and 18-carat rose-gold, the most notable difference to its predecessors is probably the new Octo's ultra-complex 41.5mm case. Hand-finished, the three-part case (bezel, middle and caseback) boasts a total of 110 polished or brushed facets, some of which end in angles as steep as 90 degrees. Named after its distinctive shape, the three-hand watch comes in an octagonal base and profile married to a round face that frames an octagonal flange.

Audemars Piguet

TRADITION TOURBILLON MINUTE REPEATER CHRONOGRAPH

This year, the Manufacture in Le Brassus has developed a model equipped with complications and clothed in a case inspired by a 1920s cushion-shaped pocket-watch belonging to its private museum. The result is the Tradition Tourbillon Minute Repeater Chronograph, produced in two 10-piece limited editions – one in pink and white gold, and the other in titanium and white gold.

Vacheron Constantin

CHINA LIMODORON

Inspired by *The Temple of Flora*, a 1799 British book of lush botanical illustrations, the China Limodoron timepiece from Vacheron Constantin couples pinprick-precise watch mechanics with ancient jewellery craft. One of the three limited-edition floral-themed watches in the Métiers d'Art Florilège collection, the piece is a classic example of sublime guillochage, enameling, and diamond-setting. Embedded beneath the orchid facade is the manual-winding calibre 4400 movement with 127 components, including 21 rubies. This floral fantasy features 85 round-cut diamonds, an 18-carat white-gold case with a diamond-set bezel, and a transparent caseback made of sapphire crystal. Truly dazzling.

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watch special

Carl F. Bucherer

MANERO MOONPHASE

Carl F. Bucherer's Manero MoonPhase Limited Edition mirrors the watchmaker's love for detail. A dial gives the current date, and the day of the week is positioned at 10 o'clock. The current month is at 2 o'clock. The special calendar is completed by the moon phase indication which appears at 6 o'clock. The watch's precision is rendered by the automatic CFB 1966 calibre.

Omega

CONSTELLATION SEDNA GOLD

This year saw the Swiss watchmaker patent the endearing and enduring 18-carat rose-gold alloy that stunningly blends three elements – gold, copper and palladium. It has been christened Sedna Gold by Omega, with reference to a trans-Neptunian object. The case features both polished and brushed elements; indexes, hands and even the strap clasp are also made of Sedna Gold. The 'pie-pan' dial traces its roots back to the very first Constellation from 1952. Incidentally, 1952 is also the number of such limited-edition timepieces being produced.

Longines

HERITAGE MILITARY 1938

Inspired by the simple and practical aesthetics of the marquee's 1930s military watches, the Longines Heritage Military 1938 features three versions – one with three hands (in pic), a 24-hour model, and a chronograph. Reminiscent of the original model, the fluted, flat crown merges smoothly with the round steel case. The black synthetic strap is stitched in white, adding the final touch to this new model of contrasts.

Rado

HYPERCHROME UTC CERAMIC PLASMA

Of late, ceramic watches – first introduced by Rado in 1986 – have become quite the trend. The new HyperChrome collection includes 32 different models, with a choice of quartz or automatic movements in a 45mm case. The collection is available in black, white and platinum with plasma-treated high-tech ceramic.

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watch special

A. Lange & Sohne

1815 RATTRAPANTE PERPETUAL CALENDAR

Two of the most popular complications in horology today are the rattrapante or split seconds chronograph and the perpetual calendar. The Lange 1815 combines them, then goes ahead and throws in a pair of additional complications to boot – a power reserve function and moon phase. In implementing these grand complications, Lange's master watchmakers also put to use traditional elements such as classic Arabic numerals, the railway-track minute scale, and the symmetrical arrangement of the subsidiary dials, as was once integrated in A. Lange & Söhne's historic pocket watches.

Watch Wizardry

Revelling in the heritage of horology, these timepieces, with their stunning complexities and iconic designs, are a connoisseur's delight.

Jaeger-LeCoultre

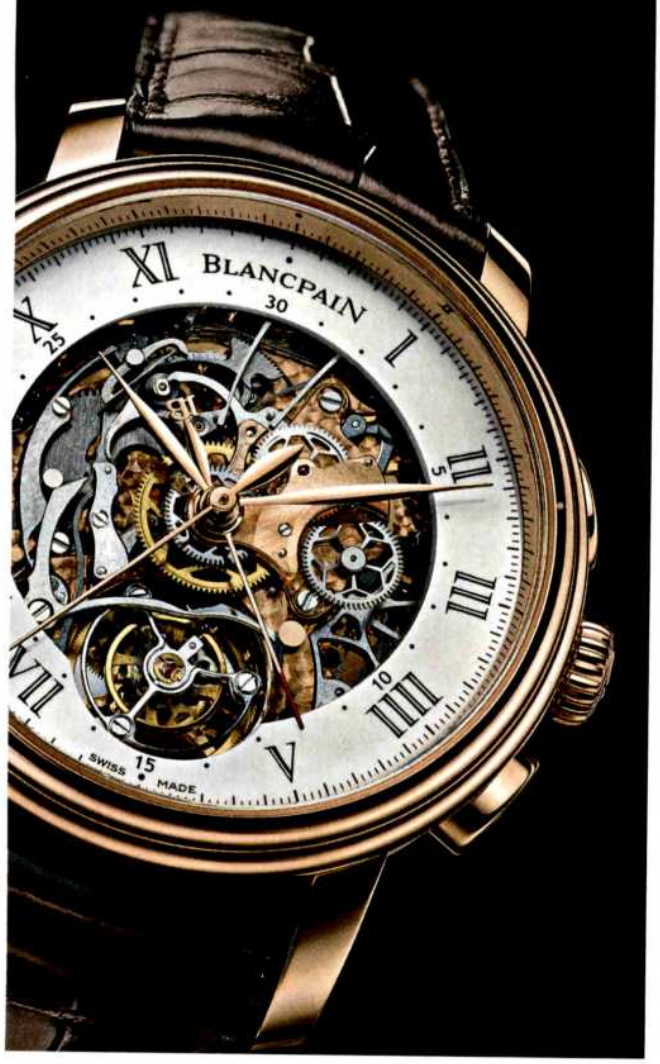
MASTER GRANDE TRADITION TOURBILLON

To mark its 180th anniversary, Jaeger-LeCoultre has launched one of its finest complications in the Master Grande Tradition line. The Master Grande Tradition Tourbillon Cylindrique à Quantième Perpétuel, a timepiece inspired by its 19th century perpetual calendars, is equipped with the new Jaeger-LeCoultre 985 automatic movement. This model is the first to combine a flying tourbillon with a cylindrical balance-spring, thus guaranteeing an exceptional level of timekeeping performance.

Blancpain

CARROUSEL RÉPÉTITION MINUTES CHRONOGRAPHE FLYBACK

It's the first timepiece to associate Carrousel and Répétition Minutes complications with a flyback chronograph in a self-winding version. Part of the Le Brassus Collection, it features the one-minute flying carrousel revamped by Blancpain in 2008 and an advanced minute repeater with a cathedral gong. This triple complication is presented in a red-gold 45mm case with a chapter ring, besides 30-minute and hour markers in Grand Feu enamelling. Blancpain's Calibre 2358, made of 546 components, offers 65 hours of power reserve and is characterised by 18-carat gold bridges and main plate.



Ulysse Nardin

SKELETON MANUFACTURE

The Skeleton Manufacture is Ulysse Nardin's first timepiece featuring a skeleton calibre that has been built in-house. Nestled within the hand-wound mechanical movement is a flying tourbillon that comprises a balance spring, anchor and escapement wheel made of silicon. The watch surface features a contrasting bead-blasted and polished finish, while colour variations enhance the visual interest of metallic components. The Skeleton Manufacture is available in two limited editions: 99 pieces in red gold (in pic) and 99 pieces in platinum.

Roger Dubuis

EXCALIBUR 42 SKELETON TOURBILLON

The Excalibur 42 Skeleton Tourbillon incorporates the flying tourbillon and the skeleton. The ergonomic 42mm houses the RD505SQ calibre movement and offers a light, spacious display of advanced mechanics in action. With 165 components, it is a perfect combination of technical excellence and visual magic in a pink or white-gold case.

Cartier

ROTONDE DE CARTIER DOUBLE TOURBILLON MYSTERY WATCH

Over 100 years after Cartier first introduced the 'Mysterious Watch' concept in 1912, it unveiled a revamped version of the idea at the SIHH 2013. The Rotonde De Cartier Double Tourbillon Mystery watch is based on the 9454MC movement, which is housed in an exquisite 45mm platinum case. The novel tourbillon is a 'double tourbillon, which means that every five minutes, it rotates on a 'mysterious' sapphire disc that appears invisible. This tourbillon is contained in a cage that also rotates once in every 60 seconds, making it a unique seconds indicator.

Piaget

EMPERADOR COUSSIN ULTRA-THIN MINUTE REPEATER

Alongside the breathtaking haute joaillerie timepieces, this year, Piaget unveiled a true watchmaking wonder: the Emperador Coussin Ultra-Thin Minute Repeater. With a calibre measuring 4.8mm and a 9.4mm case – the fourth major complication to be designed, developed and assembled entirely at the Piaget manufacture. The timepiece's calibre 1290P minute repeater sets a slimline record as the world's thinnest automatic movement.

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Upgrad

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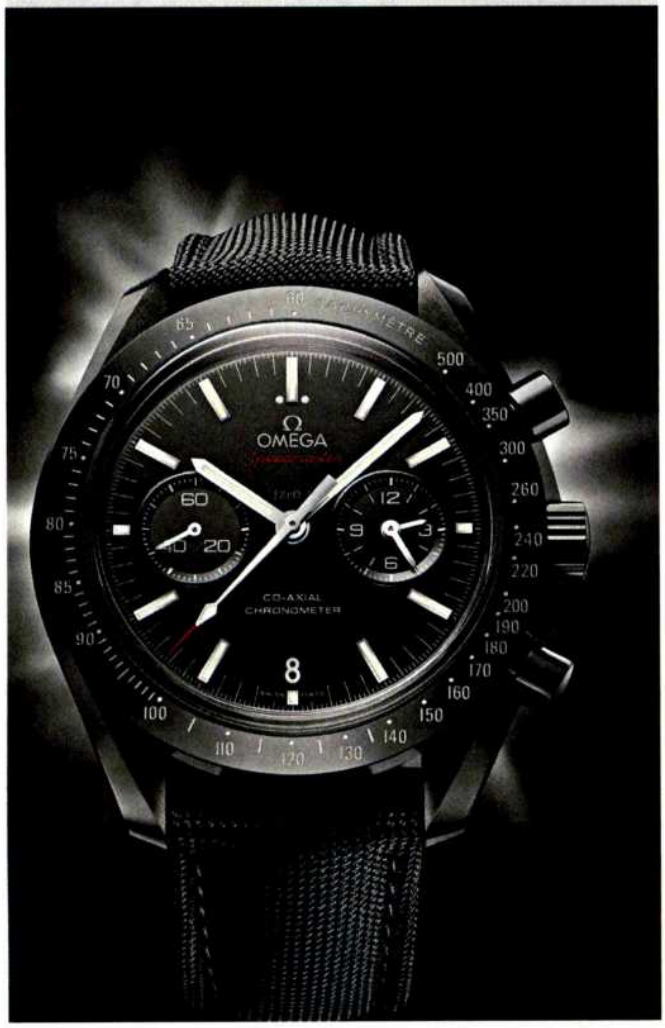
definite indication that we have come a

Omega

SPEEDMASTER 'DARK SIDE OF THE MOON'

The Omega Speedmaster is back in black. Considering that the Speedmaster series has remained NASA's personal favourite for space-bound astronauts, the title of this device hardly comes as a surprise. A sexy-yet-sophisticated take on the legendary Moonwatch timepiece, it features a matte black ceramic case and a black cordura strap while small pops of colour – in the form of red and white details – stand against the pitch black zirconium oxide ceramic dial. While the insides of the watch house a co-axial calibre 9300 automatic chronograph movement, its dial is protected by scratch-resistant sapphire crystal with anti-reflective treatment. It's all there – for those who want to grab the moon.



Montblanc

NICOLAS RIEUSSEC RISING HOURS

In the Montblanc world, time is a disc. Rising Hours, the latest offering from the prestigious watch house, relies on two discs – one placed above the other – to show not only 12 hours of a day, but also indicate their ante and post meridiems. Instead of the regular hour hand, it has a disc bearing Arabic numerals for 12 hours turning below a little triangular index, and the numbers change colour depending on whether it is night or day. And that's just one of the five disc displays that rotate on the dial!

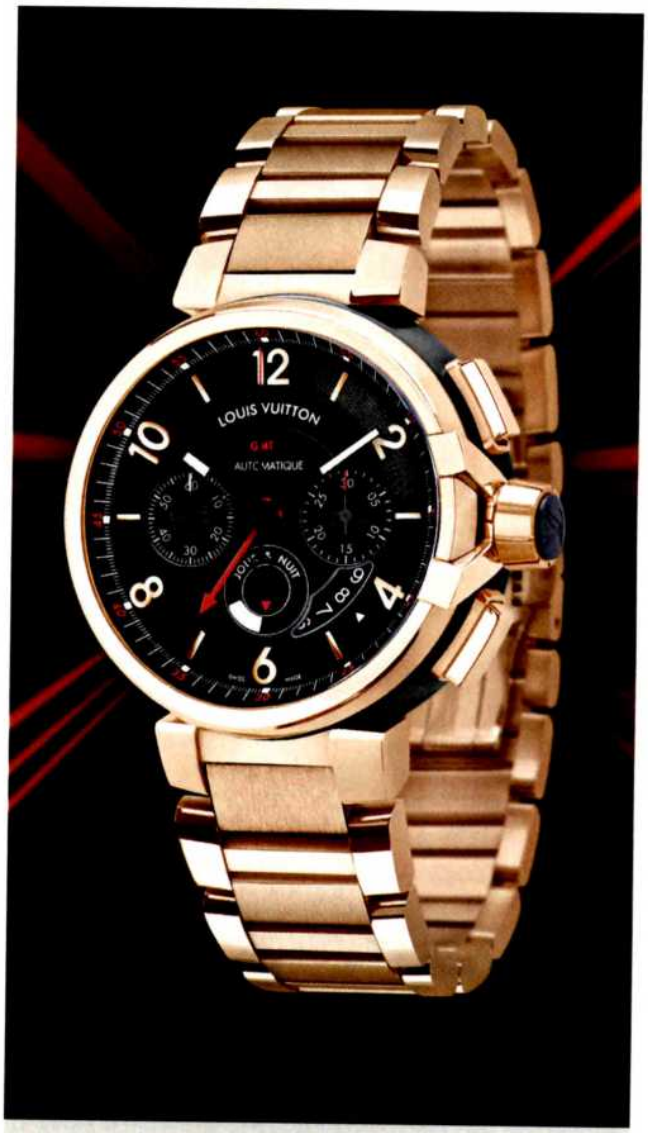
Time

r milestones in watchmaking technology, a
y from the first sundial.

Perrelet

TURBINE CHRONO

With the Chrono, Perrelet's iconic Turbine collection ushers in a timepiece that offers an apt demonstration of the brand's technical expertise. Incorporating a chronograph into a Turbine watch, Perrelet cleverly displays the additional function on its dial without detracting from the collection's singular identity. Through a set of cleverly superimposed effects, the chronograph measurements are provided by a central seconds chronograph hand and an innovative 60-minute counter.



Louis Vuitton

TAMBOUR EVOLUTION GMT CHRONOGRAPH PINK GOLD

A culmination of everything Louis Vuitton has envisioned for the urban globetrotter, the Tambour eVolution Chronograph Pink Gold is a watch for all seasons. With an edgy and highly masculine feel, it is a revolutionary departure from traditional Tambour and features a black MMC flat-edged insert with the monogram logo and a nine-groove ergonomic screw crown for enhanced grip. The eVolution is also the first Louis Vuitton watch solely with a metal strap.

More For

Raymond Weil

MAESTRO PHASE DE LUNE SEMAINIER

Raymond Weil continues its sonata of complications and craftsmanship with its latest Maestro Phase de Lune Semainier watch. The watch's 41.5mm stainless steel case features a silver-coloured dial with notable guilloche patterns accentuated with a 12-month calendar circling the circumference of the dial, black Roman numerals, and three subdials: date (at 3 o'clock), day (at 9 o'clock) and moonphase (at 6 o'clock); and midnight blue-hued hour/minute, seconds, and subdial indicators.

Victorinox

SWISS ARMY AIRBOSS AUTOMATIC TITANIUM

A blast from the past as far as aviation watches are concerned, the Swiss Army Airboss Automatic Titanium features a sandblasted matte titanium dial and a dark brown leather strap inspired by pilot jackets from the 1930s. The case, measuring 42mm in diameter and made of sandblasted grade 2 titanium scratch-resistant sapphire, is waterproof to over 100 metres. And as if that's not enough, the watch displays military time on the inside of the crystal. Go ahead, be Clark Gable from the wrist up

Less

An elegant watch doesn't necessarily have to cost you the moon. These timepieces will make your wrist look good without burning a hole in your wallet.

Tissot

T-COMPLICATION SQUELETTE

Tissot reveals the inner workings of its expertise with the T-Complication Squelette. The watch houses a new, specially developed hand-wound ETA movement that is exclusive to Tissot. It was adapted from a pocket watch but with special cut outs. The 45mm elegant timepiece features navy blue details for the marker chapter ring and offers an angled design appeal. The domed sapphire crystal is finished with a double anti-reflective coating and the watch is water-resistant to 50 metres. A lovely mix of modernity and crafstmanship.

Oris

AQUIS DEPTH GAUGE

Revolutionising the world of professional diving, Oris applies the Boyle Mariotte Law to its patented Aquis Depth Gauge to come up with an instrument that promises to be man's best friend 20,000 leagues under the sea. The black dial of the stainless steel device accommodates a full-on depth gauge complication (which involves letting water inside), even as its deceptively simple design ensures that the basic functions aren't relegated to the backdrop. Top it up with a textured ceramic bezel that rounds out the 46mm case, and you got a winner underwater!

watch special

Seiko

PREMIER

Now, this is one watch that never says die. The Seiko Premier Kinetic Direct Drive 100th Anniversary incorporates the Kinetic Direct Drive caliber, which not only powers the watch as you move but also gives you the option of winding it by turning the crown. The timepiece equivalent of the crossroads where classicism meets modernity, the Seiko Premier promises to be a delight for the watch collector as well as the practical office goer.

Balmain

ELYSÉES ROUND AUTOMATIC WATCH

Swiss watch brand Balmain's new self-winding Elysées Round Automatic watch is for those who prefer understated refinement. Decorated with Pierre Balmain "PB" logo on a sunray-brushed silver background, the timepiece comes with a 40mm case in polished stainless steel and pink PVD. The watch is water-resistant up to 30 metres.

Citizen

CITIZEN PROMASTER ECO-DRIVE SATELLITE WAVE-AIR

The Promaster Eco-Drive watch has a 'both-side' titanium case. Inspired by the rotating fan blades of an aircraft engine, the dial consists of three transparent layers, over which indexes, windows and hands are laid out respectively. Housed in a 49.5-mm case that is robust and masculine, the timepiece blends impeccable timekeeping technology with aeronautical aesthetics.

Calvin Klein

CK EAGER

A chronograph watch from the uncrowned kings of fashion, ck eager asserts a masterful presence on the wrist. Available in silver and grey with stripes, its dial creates an alternating day/night effect on the satin-finish surface. While luminescent hands mark the steady passing of time, the distinctive black technic textile strap is secured by four screwed rivets. A self-assured watch for the no-nonsense look.

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Hard Times

TAG Heuer

2013 CARRERA CALIBRE 16 TACHYMETRE DAY-DATE

The sole day-date model in the Carrera range, the Calibre 16 Tachymetre Day-Date features a revised chronograph that sits behind a Juan Manuel Fangio-themed caseback design. Offering you a choice between a sporty rubber strap and a five-row stainless steel bracelet, the Calibre 16 retains its aluminium bezel at a time when its contemporaries are getting ceramic ones. A part of the 50th anniversary of TAG Heuer's Carrera, the Calibre 16 targets fans of the older CV2014 (with just a date counter) as well as those who depend on their watches to know the day.

Hublot

BIG BANG UNICO KING GOLD

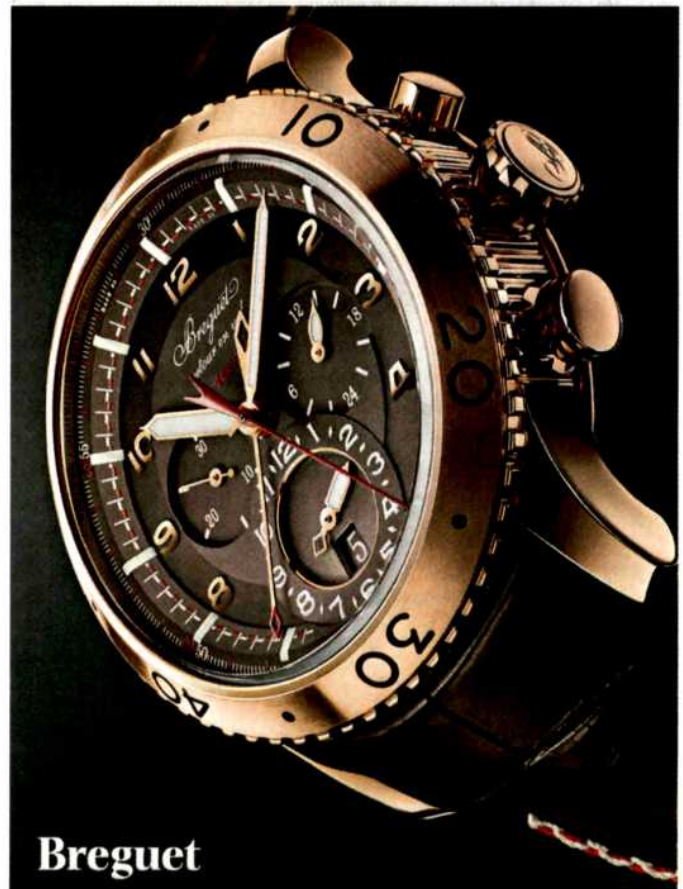
Hublot's back with a bang. And it's big. A watch with an iconic design that contains the Unico, a column wheel chronograph movement with a dual horizontal coupling visible on the dial side, Hublot's latest offering is said to be the perfect marriage between elegance and powerful technology. The Unico movement is a flyback chronograph that can be reset at any time – something that stands unique in the timepiece industry. So, go on, wear a revolution on your wrist.

Want a watch that reflects your sense of adventure? Presenting ten timepieces that marry style with utility, promising to become your best friend in the great outsides – whether you are sailing, trekking or winging it through the wide blue sky.

Corum

ADMIRAL'S CUP AC-ONE 45 REGATTA

Embodying all the classic features of the Admiral's Cup collection, the Admiral's Cup AC-One 45 Regatta features top-flight mechanics, trademark design and a DNA firmly anchored in the sailing world. The watch's new automatic calibre – the CO 040 – features a jumping countdown function adjustable from 0 to 10 minutes and a chronograph capable of timing up to 12 hours of racing. Combine this with an exquisite black dial and a case water-resistant up to 300 metres, and you relinquish the need for a first mate. Aye aye, cap'n!



Breguet

TYPE XXII 3880 IN ROSE GOLD

The Breguet Type XXII 3880 just got classier, if that's even possible. Now appearing in 18-carat rose gold, the beauty of the timepiece is taken to new levels even as the Breguet chronograph movement with silicon escapement and flat balance spring – whose frequency has been raised to 10 Hertz – ensure that the chronograph seconds hand effects a complete rotation in just 30 seconds. The dial includes a second time-zone indicator at 6 o'clock, along with an aperture for the date, and an integrated brown leather strap effectively complements the dial as well as the rose gold of the case. Splurge, splurge!

IWC

INGENIEUR CHRONOGRAPH SILBERPFEIL

The Chronograph Silberpfeil has its origins in the Mercedes-Benz W25 Silver Arrow, which famously got its name when pit crew personnel stripped the paint off the car to achieve its weight limit – revealing a silvery aluminium bodywork. The watch's dial, available in silver or brown, sports a cloud-like perlage pattern of overlapping circles that evokes the dashboard of the legendary race car. Powered by the Calibre 89361, the watch has a power reserve of 68 hours and a flyback function engineered with racing pit stops in mind. A device for chronograph and car enthusiasts alike.

Zenith

PILOT MONTRE D'AERONEF TYPE 20 GMT

When you are flying at 600 miles per hour 45,000 feet above ground level, you don't want your instruments giving up on you. Keeping this in view, Zenith takes its aviation legacy to a whole new level with the Pilot Montre d'Aeronef Type 20 GMT. The 40mm steel instrument echoes all the distinctive visual features of its worthy predecessors – a wide-grooved and screw-locked crown, imposing Arabic numerals of white Superluminova, and a large matt black dial – while drawing its power from an automatic Zenith Elite 693 movement with a 50-hour power reserve.

Chopard

SUPERFAST AUTOMATIC

If Chopard's Classic Racing collection pays tribute to the automobile world, it is the Superfast Automatic that drives it full speed ahead. The imposing 18-carat rose gold case of the Superfast Automatic gives it a powerful presence on the wrist, thanks to its purely assertive personality. The watch's contemporary design, unique see-through engine finish and 60-hour power reserve place it in a very prominent position as compared to its peers in the collection – the Superfast Power Control and Superfast Chrono.

Graham

CHRONOFIGHTER OVERSIZE SUPERLIGHT TT

Though this Chronofighter weighs less than 100g due to a carbon nanotube speckled composite case, it's a lightweight by no stretch of the imagination. Enabling the measurement of speed with a special tachymeter scale based on the length of the TT circuit, the watch is powered by a calibre G1747 automatic movement with a power reserve of 48 hours and has an incabloc shock absorber for protection from anything life may throw at it.

Parmigiani Fleurier

THE PERSHING CBF

The result of a partnership between Parmigiani Fleurier and the Confederacao Brasileira de Futbol, the Pershing CBF is sporty, modern and electrifying in intense blue. Featuring a titanium case with a choice of white gold or rose gold bezel, the dial showcases the three colours of the CBF – gold, blue and green – in perfect harmony. Also, five victory stars commemorating the world cups won by the national team replace the small seconds index at 3'o clock. Go, Brazil!

Breitling

EMERGENCY II

The very first watch with a built-in personal locator beacon, the Breitling Emergency II could very well be your best friend in a plane crash. Made up of a revolutionary rechargeable battery, a miniature dual frequency transmitter and an integrated antenna system, it establishes itself as a survival instument in all kinds of distress situations. The stunning bright-orange dial and sturdy titanium case doesn't hurt either.

top shop

Asus Fonepad

Here's the perfect mash-up you've been looking for: Asus Fonepad, a 7-inch tablet that also has phone functionality. Additional features include LED backlit display with a resolution of 1280x800 pixels and 10-finger multi-touch, 3 MP and 1.2 MP rear and front cameras respectively. The tablet is powered by a 1.6GHz Intel Atom Z2460 processor with 1GB of RAM, runs on Android 4.1 Jelly Bean and comes with 32GB internal storage. Staying connected is so much easier now.

Price: ₹17,999

Osim uDivine

Sit, relax and enjoy being 'pummelled' by Osim's uDivine massage chair, which now comes with a dedicated massage app. For those who can't put their phones down, the massage chair comes with a dedicated iOS app that acts as a personal advisor and provides details on all the 13 professionally crafted massage programmes created by Japanese expert Sato Tsuyoshi. Get pampered.

Price: $4,489 (₹2.64 lakh approx)

Globe-Trotter Safari Colonial Vanity Case

This vintage, classy spin on the briefcase by Globe-Trotter is an instant hit. Dubbed the Safari Colonial Vanity Case, it comes equipped with a numerical combination lock to keep all your valuables safe. Featuring burgundy leather trim and a vulcanised fibreboard body, it proves itself to be a sophisticated yet high-quality piece of luggage.

Price: On request

Nikon Coolpix A

This sleek camera offers a level of performance usually reserved for advanced Nikon D-SLR models. The palm-sized maestro creates stunning photos and full HD 1080p videos through state-of-the-art 18.5mm (28 mm in 35mm format equivalent) f/2.8 NIKKOR lens, ensuring beautifully blurred backgrounds and tack-sharp subjects even in low light.

Price: ₹54,950

Montblanc Honoré de Balzac Pen

This limited-edition writing instrument with rhodium plating and a gold nib is dedicated to Honoré de Balzac, the greatest among French literary artists. A collector's item all the way.

Price: On request

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Vegetarian Paradise

Royal Vega redefines luxury vegetarian cuisine. BY PRACHI BHUCHAR

SILK MEETS SPICE IN GENEROUS PORTIONS AT the Royal Vega, Chennai, one of India's only tributes to rich vegetarian cuisine. Before you groan at the thought of heavy curries and acidity-inducing meals, the menu here is pure genius and draws on the best that the subcontinent and its immediate neighbours have to offer in terms of authentic flavours, textures and tales that evoke a glorious past. The restaurant, housed within the ITC Grand Chola, Chennai, draws on the philosophy of taste or rasa and the use of seasonal produce to create food from what were once India's prized princely states. The interiors are evocative of a mahal and traditional thalis and a novel serving style adds to the charm of what is arguably one of India's finest vegetarian meals. The restaurant is divided into five sections, inspired by the dining areas of ancient royalty.

I would recommend the signature tasting menu or Ranjit Khasa which is available all year round but draws on seasonal variations to provide variety. What you can expect is to be fed dishes that are clean tasting, cleverly produced and rich without being heavy. The kundan koftah, stuffed with tart plums and cooked in a cinnamon-flavoured gravy is topped off with gold leaf and if like me, you are apprehensive about mixing fruits or nuts in your dishes, breathe easy. Something as simple as their version of the palak paneer, called palak chaman, melts in your mouth without leaving a residue of earthy spinach long after the last bite. The palak mangori karhi, also part of this meal, is another winner, tempered with clarified butter but without the heaviness that generally accompanies such dishes. You are served a number of gravy and dry dishes, an assortment of well-thought-out pulavs and Indian breads that draw on the best produce each region has to offer.

To round off the meal, try the shahi mitha, an interesting take on shahi tukda or bread pudding. Pistachio praline, milk and a sprinkle of caramel add the finer nuances to this dessert. If you are a gourmand, before scoffing at at an all-vegetarian meal, try the thali at the Royal Vega and you are guaranteed to be floored by the simple yet elegant cuisine that makes its mark here.

Palak mangoi karhi
Shahi mitha

Meal for two: ₹5,000 (alcohol and taxes extra)

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Chennai

The interiors of the Royal Vega are evocative of a palace ▲

A mix of Orient and Occident make for the decor at the Thai Pavilion ▲
Crispy fried fish ▶

Legend Comes to Town

The Thai Pavilion at Vivanta by Taj provides for a truly rewarding experience. BY ANUSHREE BASU-BHALLA

THE THAI PAVILION WAS PERHAPS THE ONLY 'legendary' restaurant missing from the NCR's dining repertoire. Standing tall for over two decades, it was only a matter of time before the city got a taste of the legend. While comparisons with its Mumbai and Hyderabad counterparts are inevitable, the third edition of the Thai Pavilion at Vivanta by Taj, Gurgaon, is quite an impressive extension of the franchise. The slick, glassed-in restaurant blends seamlessly with the city. The interiors, which are warm and welcoming, showcase a balance between Oriental aesthetics and European baroque. The well-stocked bar is a separate section where patrons can socialise before tucking into a truly delicious meal.

The kitchen is run by an unassuming and very gifted expat, Chef Prajaub Shoosridam from southern Thailand. He sources most of his ingredients – right from the galangal and makroot leaves to the ubiquitous lemongrass – from home, and insists on making relatively small portions for his phad noodles so that they don't sit on the kitchen table for too long.

My culinary evening began with a crisp glass of fine Chilean Tarapaca Pritas chardonnay and a rather punchy mushroom and tomato salad tossed in lemongrass that aptly set the stage for the vibrant flavours to follow. Up next were slightly starchy corn cakes paired with a honey-chilly dip. Delectable finger food came in the form of marinated and fried chicken morsels wrapped in pandanus leaves. For mains, go for the crispy fried fish that impresses with the requisite crunch in the mouth. The home-style stir fried vegetables with phad phak noodles constitutes a hearty meal in itself. Staunch meat-lovers will love to tuck into the juicy grilled lamb chops served with mint and cucumber sauce. The conventional red curry, meant to be sampled with the fragrant jasmine rice, is a delight too.

Thai cuisine with its perfectly balanced five verticals of flavour – spicy, sour, sweet, salty, and bitter – puts equal emphasis on ending a meal with a cooling dessert. Exhibit A: a refreshing combination of crunchy diced water chestnut with rose-flavoured coconut milk, presented inside a green coconut shell. A multi-sensory photo-finish to a fabulous meal!

Stir-fried veggies with phad phak noodles

Meal for two (alcohol extra)
₹3,000

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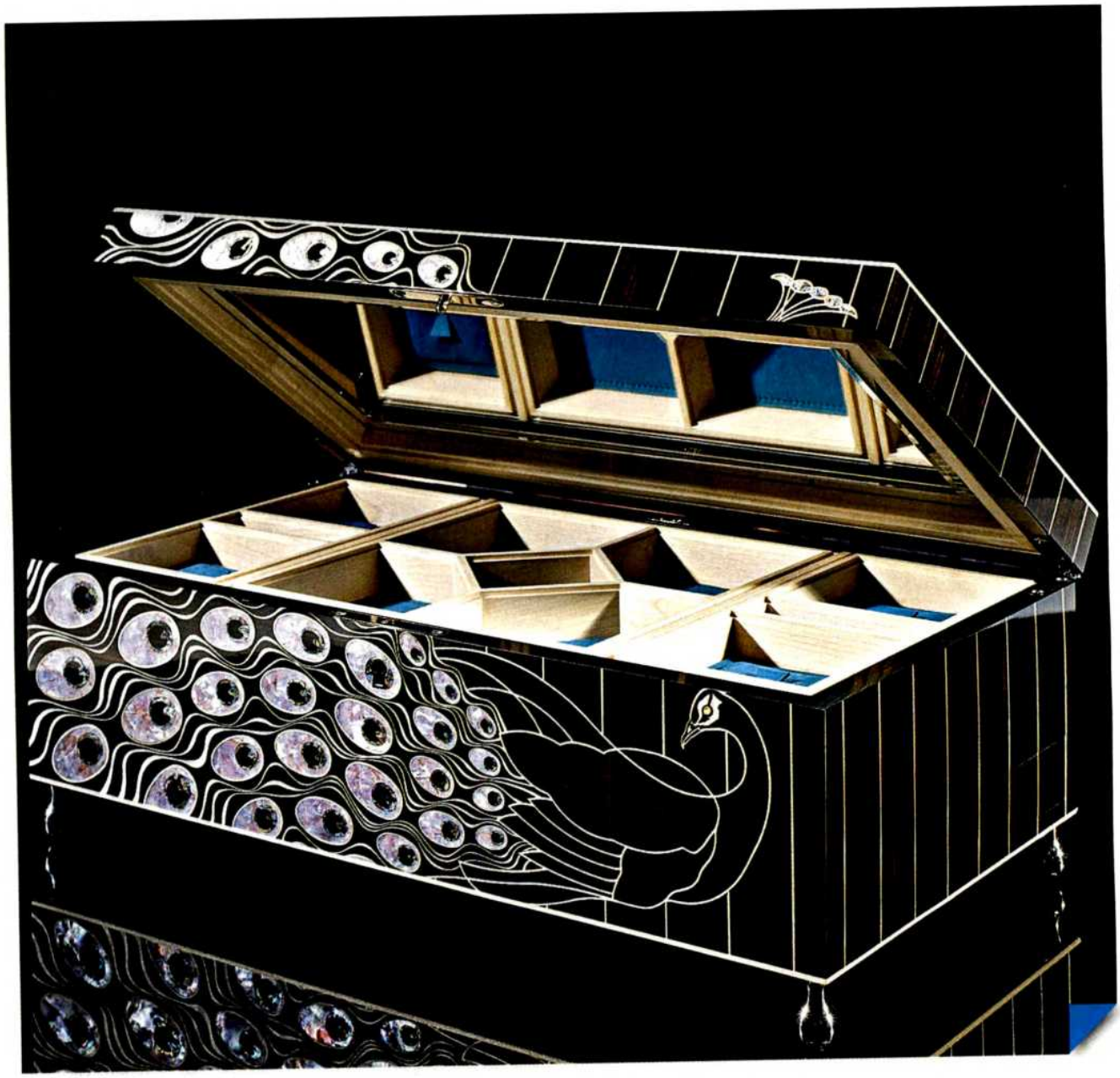
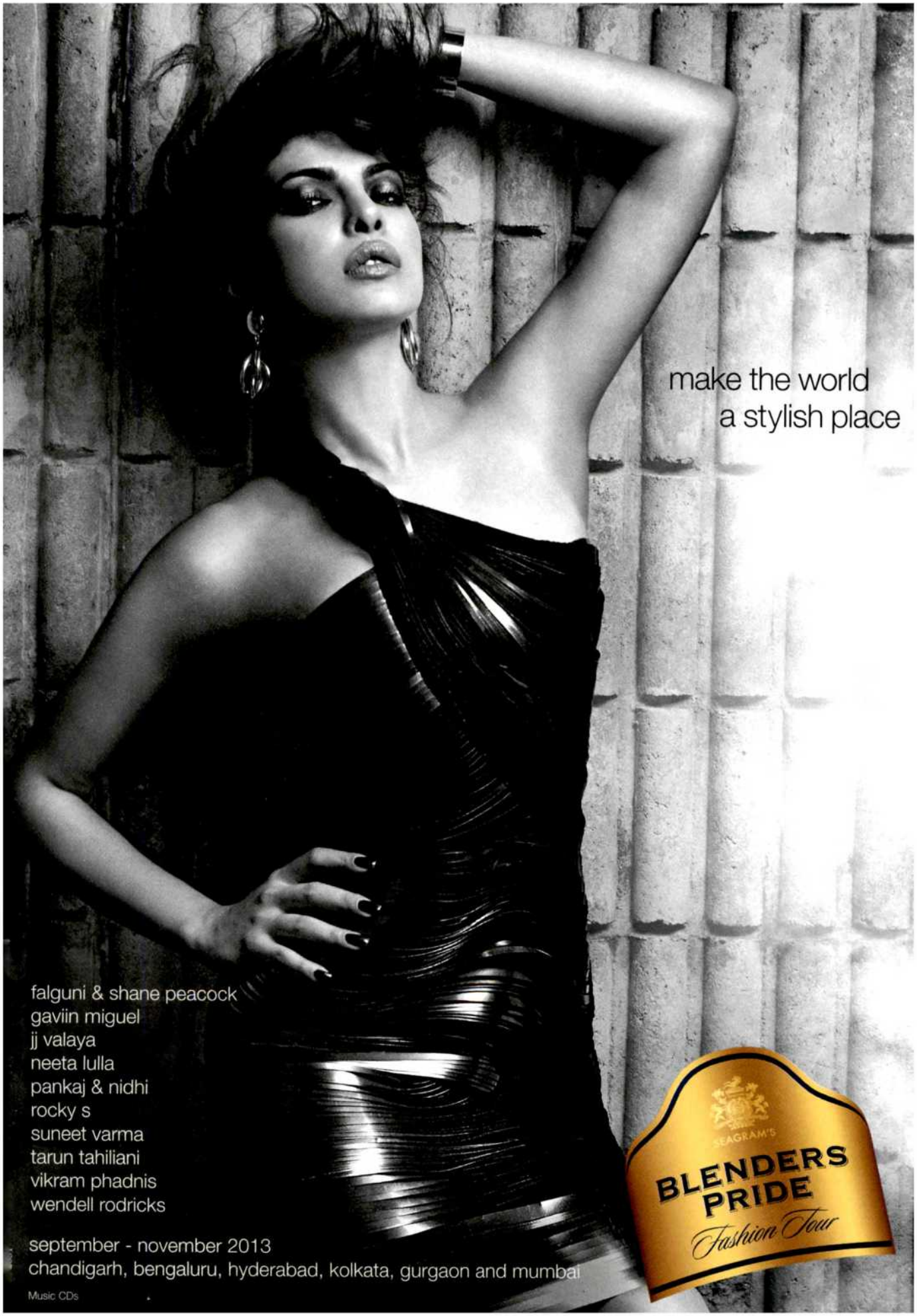
splurge



Beauty and the Box

LONDON-BASED WOODWORKER DAVID LINLEY INGENIOUSLY CAPTURES THE TIMELESSNESS OF A FOND memory in his new limited-edition collection of keepsake boxes. Each piece has a distinct personality, enhanced with a nickel, silver and mother-of-pearl finish and high-gloss veneers. Consider this endearing piece by the designer. Limited only to 10 boxes, this Ebony Pearl edition has a striking mother-of-pearl inlay in the shape of a peacock, a Macassar ebony veneer and a soft faux-leather interior in vibrant blue. The shapes of the internal compartments and trays are inspired by English garden designs, while teardrop-shaped feet in brilliant nickel mirror the geometric inlays on the regal bird's plumage. Price: £9,000. Made to order at www.davidlinley.com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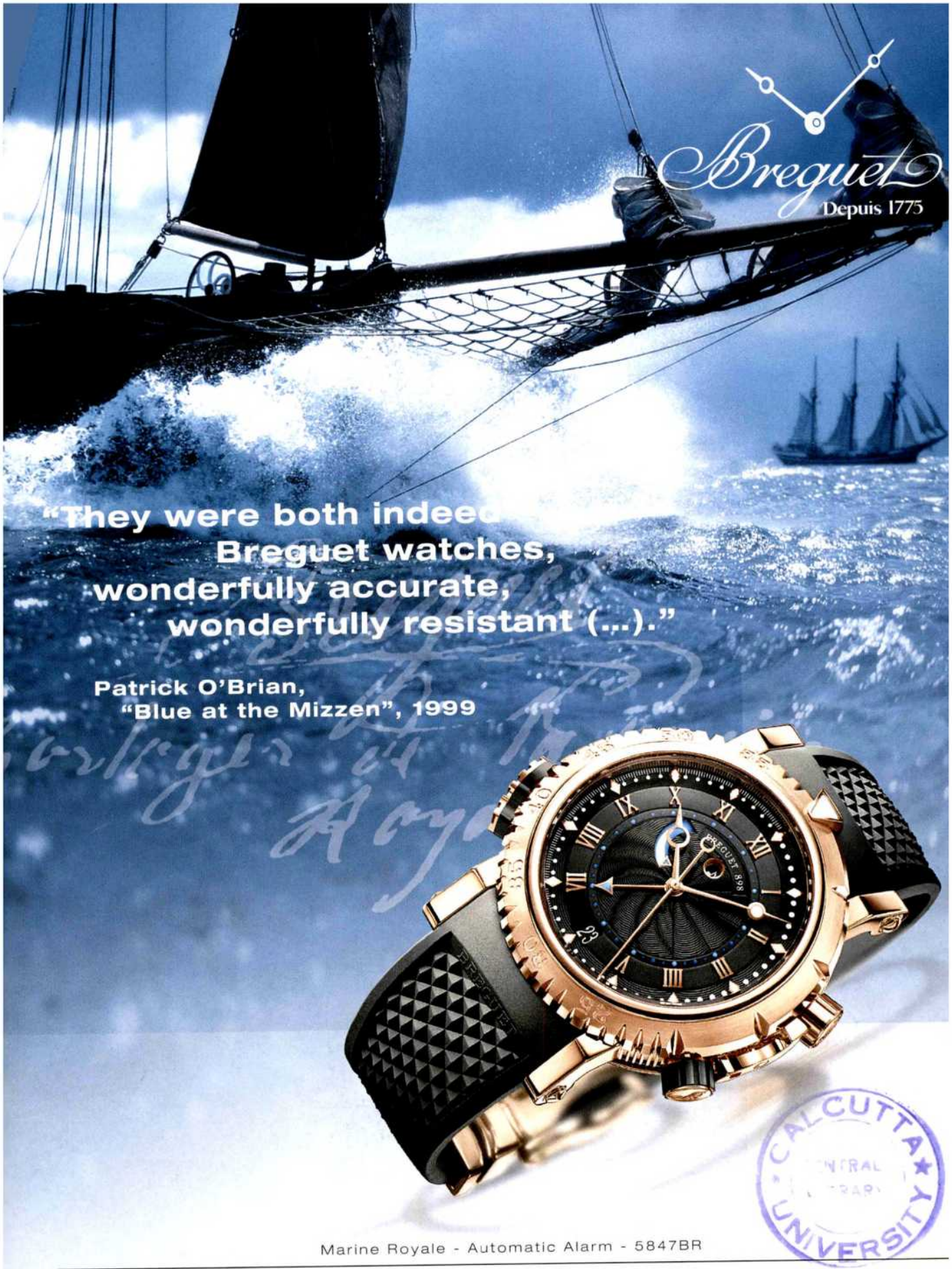

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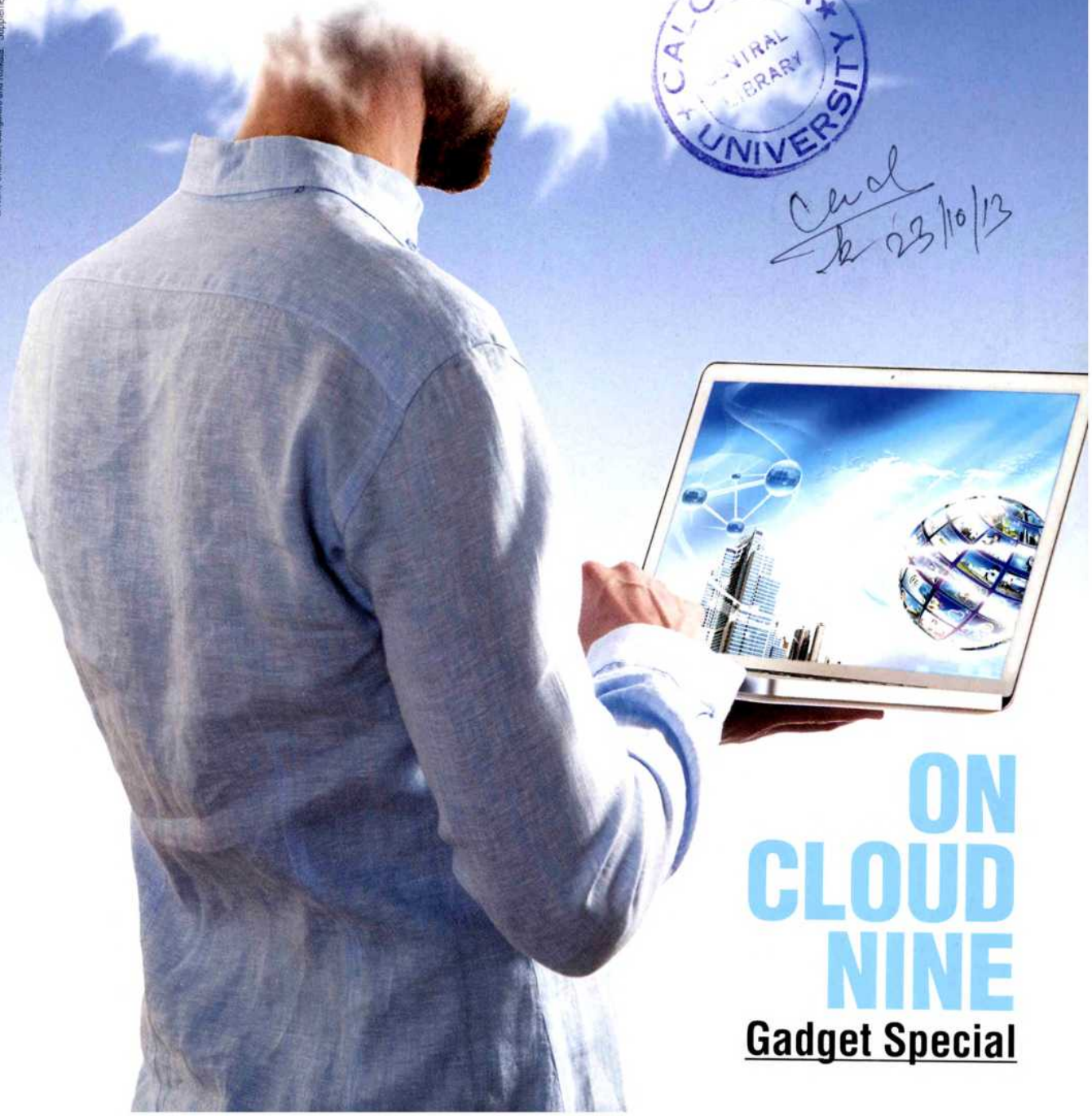

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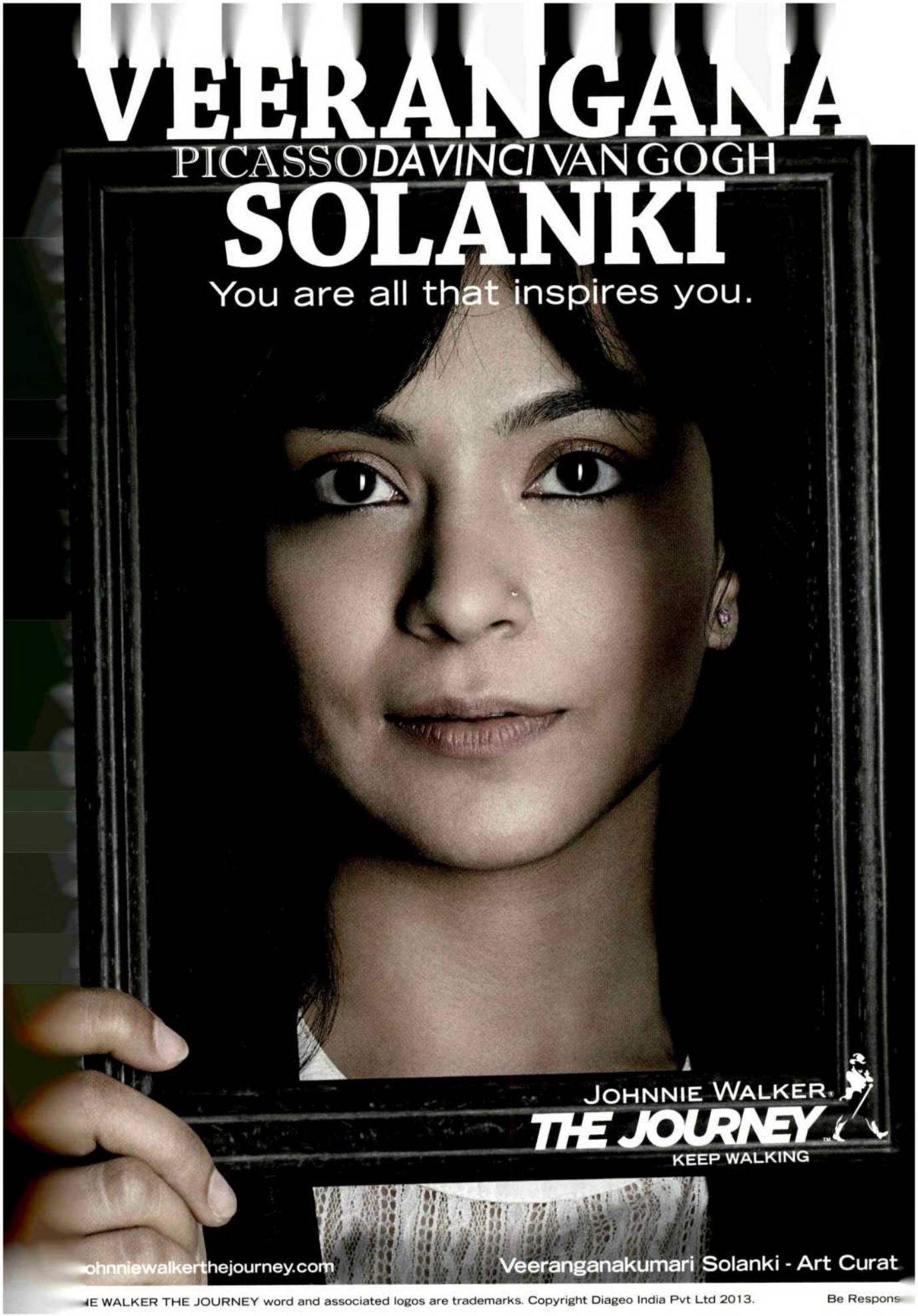
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16 TECH TALES
How gadget-friendly are you? A look at some of the most hi-tech devices launched this year

INDIA TODAY GROUP

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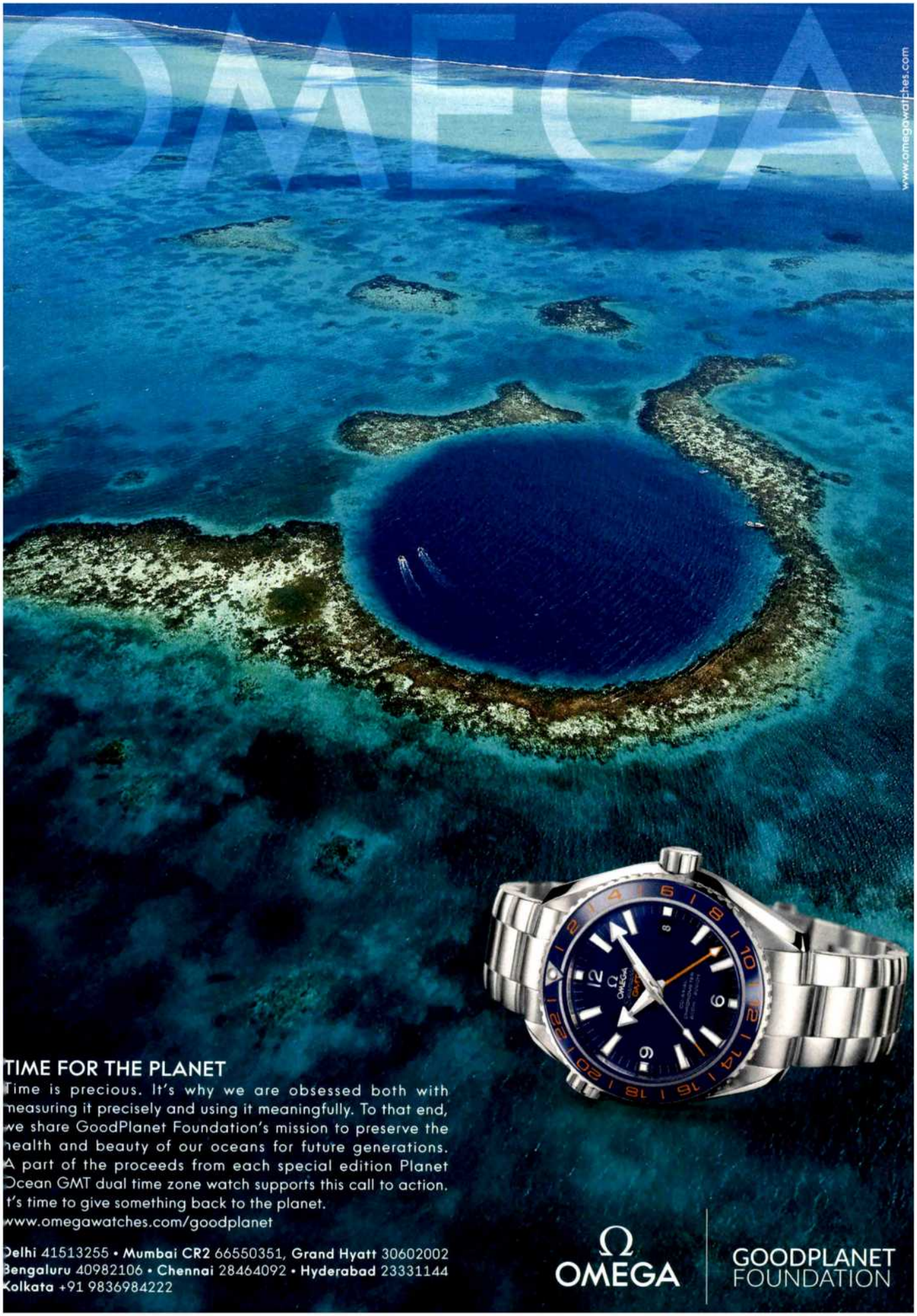
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Art of Gifting

This festive season, don't work yourself into a tizzy. Here are some pointers from Pooja Lal, director of DelightGifts.in.

GO BY THE RULES

When gifting in a corporate capacity, ascertain if the recipient's firm allows its employees to receive gifts. You could call its HR or marketing division for clarification; you wouldn't want to face the embarrassment of having your gift returned.

MAKE IT APPROPRIATE

The budget for the gifts should be set in accordance with the recipient's position – whether he is a VIP, a long-term customer or a new client. If the recipients are an entire team or department, you may opt for a collective gift – such as mixed nuts, candy or a basket of goodies – over individual ones.

GIFT CARDS ARE IN

While vouchers may seem impersonal, they happen to be a very practical gifting option. Movie tickets and dining vouchers will make any employee happy, but VIP clients would prefer golf lessons, wine tasting sessions or a fine dining experience.

GIVE PROSPECTIVE CLIENTS A MISS

Avoid sending gifts to prospective clients as it may seem like an attempt to influence their business decision. Instead, settle for a nice hand-signed card with a sincere note that conveys your greetings and says that you hope to work with them in the New Year.

LOGO OR NO LOGO

While the decision to put your company logo on a product is a personal one, it mostly depends on the situation. A digital photo frame or a crystal bowl of gourmet chocolates may carry a small but tasteful logo, but playing it up on inexpensive products such as keychains or mugs may be considered inappropriate.

4 phone GPS apps

Navfree GPS Live

This app, which runs on user-curated map data, is frequently updated and does not constantly feed on your data connection. The integrated Google and Bing search apps provide dedicated passenger direction.

Sygic & MapmyIndia

It facilitates a heightened motoring experience with its detailed turn-by-turn 3D accelerated and voice-guided navigation. This app issues lane-change warnings and allows you to add your own points-of-interest. Rs 1,399

Waze

A free community-based traffic and navigation app, Waze is updated by users to report construction or accidents on routes. You contribute real-time traffic updates simply by driving with your app enabled.

MapQuest

With an interface that's easy on the eyes, MapQuest provides a single box search for locations of interest and driving directions - with draggable routes enabled.

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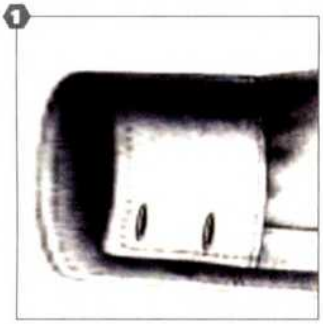
Get Suave with Cufflinks



Your dress shirt should have extra-long French or double cuffs, with no buttons and a pair of holes on either side, adding up to a set of four holes on each cuff.

Fold the cuffs back, making sure they form a neat and even line at the end of the sleeves. When the two sides lie flat away from the wrist, hold it pressed together.

Push the cufflink with its swivel bar closed through the overlapping holes. The decorative part of the cufflink should be facing outwards.

Push the swivel bar open to fasten the cufflink and complete the T shape. The cuff links are securely fastened when the T-shape is completely flat.

Juice up your Phone

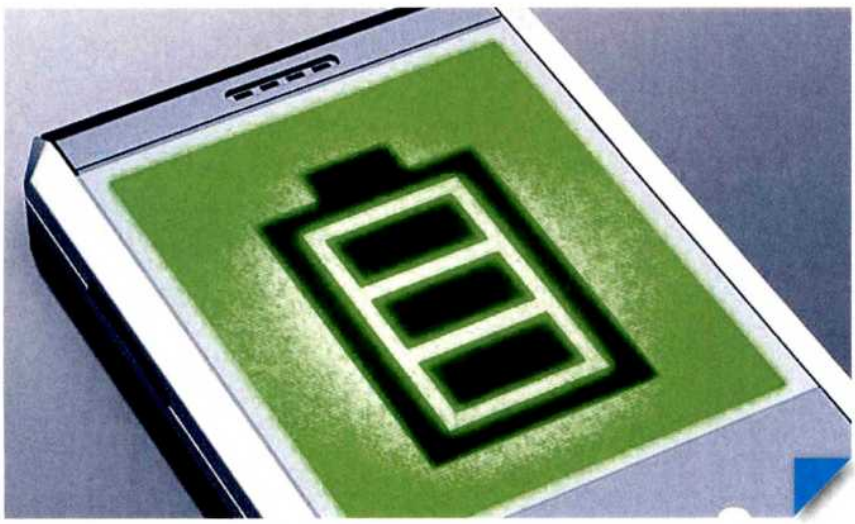
WHILE YOU CAN TRUST YOUR smartphone to live up to its name, here are some smarter tips to ensure optimum battery performance over the years.

CHARGE FREQUENTLY

Contrary to popular belief, your smartphone's lithium-ion battery has to be charged frequently – even when it's not completely used up – to maintain its original capacity. Don't let the charge go all the way down; plug it in when there's at least one bar left on the battery.

DIM THE SCREEN

More than any other component, it's your phone's larger-than-life colour visual display that saps the battery. Enable your phone's auto-brightness feature, which automatically adjusts the screen's brightness to suit ambient light.



LOSE THAT TOOTH

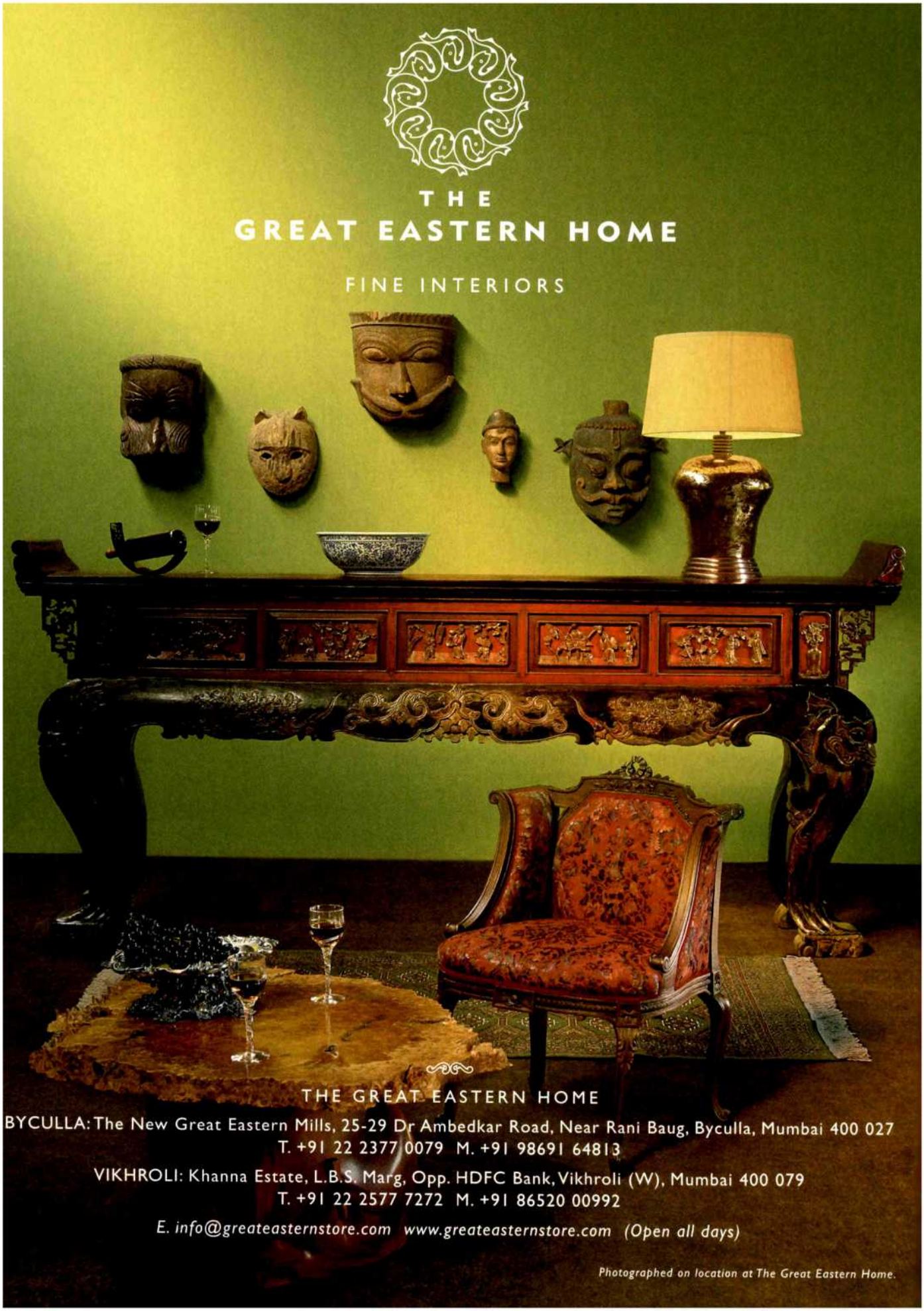
Bluetooth and Wi-Fi are serious battery drainers because the phone keeps scanning even when the connectivity is poor. By turning these apps off when you're not using them, you add an extra hour to your battery's life.

LET IT RING

Opt for ringtones over the vibration mode to save charge. While the ringtone makes just a tiny membrane in your phone speaker vibrate, the vibration motor swings a small weight around to make the whole phone shake –using up a lot of power.

REDUCE SCREEN TIMEOUT

Every second your phone stays lit, it uses up power. Set your timeout to the shortest available time, usually 15 seconds on Android phones. This helps if you are not in the habit of locking your phone, letting the light go out by itself.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THE GREAT GAMBLE

For £96,000, fly to 12 casinos in eight global destinations over a period of four weeks. A gambler's dream come true!

Las Vegas figures prominently in the package itinerary ▲

HAVE ENOUGH TIME AND MONEY to burn? Luxury launches company VeryFirstTo has come out with a month-long holiday package that takes couples to 12 casinos in eight destinations across the world over a period of four weeks. Quite predictably, Las Vegas – with casinos such as The Venetian, Bellagio, Caesar's Palace and MGM – features heavily in the travel itinerary. Other locations where you would be encouraged to try your luck are the Venetian Macao and Wynn Macau, both in Macau; Casino de Monte Carlo in Monaco; Casino Baden-Baden in Germany; Foxwood in Connecticut; Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City; Atlantis Paradise in the Bahamas; and Park Hyatt Mendoza in Argentina. The package is priced at £96,000 per couple, assuming a London departure, and couples would be provided with a daily £100 credit for an online gambling site – any winnings derived from the wagers would be split equally between the couple and a nominated charity.

TOURISTS RAIN ON ICELAND

Been working hard all year and now want to go for that perfect vacation which will have everyone in office talking for months? Try Iceland and Slovakia, which the European Travel Commission pegs as the fastest-growing tourist destinations in Europe. While Iceland experienced an impressive 30 per cent spike in foreign arrivals in the second quarter of 2013, Slovakia saw a 20 per cent increase in international visitors this spring. Iceland's biggest draw for tourists was its rich natural landscape – comprising dramatic geysers, lava fields and towering waterfalls. Slovakia, on the other hand, has picturesque castles, relaxing spa towns and natural landscapes that will remain etched in your memory for a lifetime.

THE KINGS OF GREEN

Want to fly with minimal qualms about pollution and fuel wastage on your conscience? The 2013 Eco-Aviation Awards has named United Airlines, AirBerlin, Qantas and Air Canada as the greenest airlines in the world – whether it comes to building a fuel-efficient fleet or exploring sustainable fuel options. US-based United Airlines took the gold for saving 83 million gallons of fuel by replacing its fleet with more fuel-efficient aircraft. AirBerlin, on the other hand, took the silver for decreasing the fuel burn per 100 revenue passenger kilometres to 3.4 litres, cutting CO^2 emissions by 100,000 tonnes. Now, that's eco-friendly!

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CABIN FEVER

Close on the heels of Singapore Airlines unveiling its new interiors, Hong Kong-based Cathay Pacific has also revealed its 'newly refreshed' first-class product – designed by renowned London architecture firm Foster+Partners. Created for the airline's Boeing 777-300ER fleet, the cabin features white leather, reflective dark grey surfaces, handmade wool carpet and walnut finishes. The reading light, on the other hand, has been custom-designed to cast fewer shadows while working or dining.

QUANTUM OF EXHILARATION

Finding your sea legs has never been a more welcome experience. Attached to a crane-like arm on the Royal Caribbean's Quantum of the Seas, the cherry picker-like North Star pod offers out-of-the-world experiences to guests by elevating them above the ocean and turning them at 360 degree angles on each 15-minute journey. And unless you want to book an exclusive package, the experience comes completely free of cost. Among other attractions on the Quantum of the Seas are the Ripcord, a simulated skydiving attraction that keeps passengers floating and spinning above a wind tunnel over one of the top decks, and bumper cars for children. For the more fitness-inclined, it has a full-size basketball court and a flying trapeze. The ship, which will sail from the New York Harbour in November 2014, is also the first to offer virtual balconies — every stateroom on board will have a real-time view of the sea.

Into the great wide open, courtesy the North Star ▲

IT'S LIFT-OFF FOR AIR INDIA

In the light of the recent Jet-Etihad alliance, Air India has started rolling out plans to increase its share in the business travel sector. Besides making its frequent flier programme more attractive through tie-ups with banks and hotels, the airline has been offering holiday packages in partnership with MakeMyTrip.com – drawing an increasing number of business travellers into its fold. According to the latest stats, Air India has achieved most of the passenger load targets and yields set in its turnaround plan for 2012-13. Other areas it has excelled in are on-time performance and business class occupancy, and the revenue is up 15 per cent over the year-ago period.

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Free (iOS, Android)
By GateGuru Inc.

Having a tough time searching for the men's room in a strange airport where people speak an even stranger language? Here's GateGuru, a leading travel application that will guide you through over 204 airports across Canada, Europe, Asia, Australia and the US. There are maps, photos, user reviews – everything you will need.

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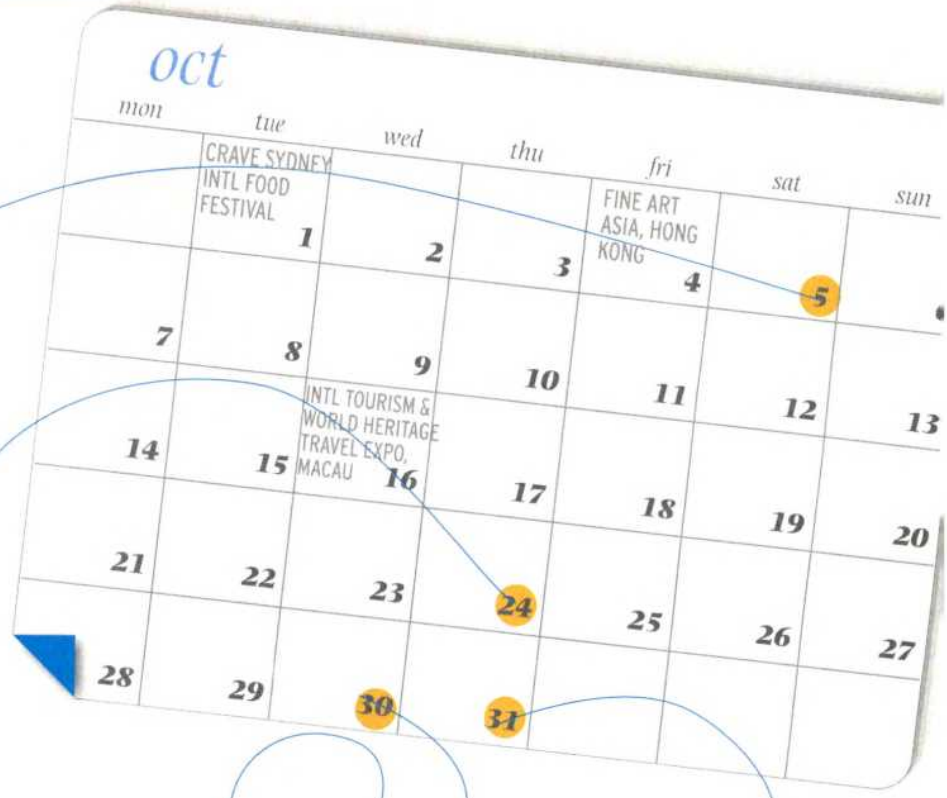

5-7 Oct

TWE WHISKY SHOW 2013, LONDON, UK

Every year, the Whisky Exchange pushes the unique 'Whisky Show' concept forward, making it the United Kingdom's premium whisky tasting event. The Whisky Show has been held in Vinopolis, near London's famous Borough Market, since 2011, and has been a huge success. This event brings together the drinks brands as well as buyers, distributors,

bartenders and writers who make the industry what it is. For more information on this event, visit the show website at www.whisky-show.com. So, go ahead and get high on the most golden of liquors!

24 Oct - 2 Nov

THE ABU DHABI INT. FILM FESTIVAL 2013

The Abu Dhabi Film Festival will return for its 7th edition this year. A key event in Abu Dhabi's cultural calendar, the Film Festival contributes to the Emirate being positioned as a regional creative hub through its focus on high quality, Arab cinema. For screenings and entry passes visit abudhabifilmfestival.ae

30 Oct - 4 Nov

SALON DU CHOCOLAT, PARIS

The gourmet chocolate exhibition will house confectionery and regional specialities to delight the taste buds of all epicureans. Together with this, The Salon du Chocolat will host more than 400 participants, chocolatiers, chefs and pastry chefs, and cocoa experts, from all over the world. The highpoint of the event is the couture show with chocolate. More info on salonduchocolat.fr

31 Oct - 4 Nov

FORT LAUDERDALE INTERNATIONAL BOAT SHOW, FLORIDA, USA

Fort Lauderdale, lives up to its nickname as 'yachting Capital of the world', hosting the 54th Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show. The event will showcase a wide range of high performance boats from yacht builders and designers to exotic cars and brokerage yachts. For details about the show, visit their website: showmanagement.com

Hyatt Regency Delhi *Residence* launched.
Now you have a new address to call "home"- 29 fully serviced and ready-to-move-in apartments designed by leading architects 1508 London. They are situated in the most sought-after location in Delhi. Featuring comprehensive security systems and basic amenities to make a stay truly comfortable, they are now available in one, two or three bedrooms for rent and lease.
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Waking Hour Blues

Feel like you never get enough time for anything in the morning? Some tips on waking up early, so you can finish crucial tasks with time to spare and give your day a good start.

The snooze button can be quite a temptation when you are in bed ▲

Get the timings right

Late to work again? Instead of blaming it on your 'bad day', try to analyse the situation at hand. Did you give yourself an arbitrary time span (40 minutes or so - bleh!) to complete your morning chores, instead of looking at the actual hours it would take to do it? Things will start looking up immediately after you finally organise your morning schedule.

The food quotient

If you wake up late every morning because you have trouble falling asleep the previous night, plan your dinner and snacks around foods that contribute to a good night's sleep -- including bananas, honey, potatoes and almonds. Also, eat light at night and save the big meals for the more sprightly morning.

Say can't to caffeine

Stop depending on caffeine to wake you up in the morning; such a habit could prove harmful in the long run. Instead, try other methods like filling the room with light, challenging yourself to ignore the snooze button, and reminding yourself of the tasks that await you through the day.

Jolt yourself awake

You may have noticed that when you are woken up by a loud noise, you end up getting shocked into complete alertness. You could probably schedule your music system or television to turn itself on automatically at a particular hour. The higher the volume, the better – just make sure it does not end up rupturing your eardrums or annoying the old lady next door.

Kick that Butt

Calling it quits on smoking is admittedly a very tough task. Six ways to distance yourself from the habit.

Make a contract

Set a quit date and write a "quit date contract" with your signature and that of a witness – preferably somebody you spend a lot of your time with. That way, even if you resume the habit, you may feel awkward doing it before that person.

Don't stock up

In the run-up to your quitting date, stop buying whole packets. If you get just one cigarette or two at a time, they won't be immediately available when you feel like a smoke later. This will help you resist temptation once you have finally called it quits.

Junk all reminders

When your quit date finally arrives, throw out anything that reminds you of smoking. This includes all smoking paraphernalia – leftover cigarettes, matches, lighters, ashtrays, cigarette holders, and even the car lighter.

Break away

Cigarette breaks are one of the main reasons for former smokers getting back into the habit. So, the next time you feel like a cigarette break at work, play a game of solitaire on your computer. Or make a phone call to a friend.

Go nuts

Switch your cigarette habit for a nutty one. If you have four nuts (with shell) for every cigarette, you would be using your hands and mouth for getting the same physical and oral sensations you derive from smoking.

Glass jar solution

You may not realise it, but you are probably spending a lot of money on cigarettes. Put all the money saved in a glass jar, and the sight of notes piling up inside should be enough to keep you going. It's beautiful.

iRiver On

IF YOU LIKE HAVING YOUR EARPLUGS ON WHEN YOU work out, here's something that will give you something more than just your regular dose of music. The On headset by iRiver connects to both Android and iOS devices, giving information on pulse rate, distance travelled, speed and maximal oxygen consumption. There are zero cords to worry about; the On connects to both Android and iOS devices via Bluetooth, so you'll be able to go about your exercise routine restriction-free.

Price: ₹12,200

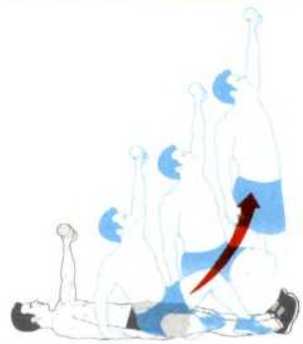
THE MICRO-WORKOUT

From Men's Health

Your regular routine leaving no time for a full-scale workout? A three-stage exercise circuit that will boost your metabolism and burn fat.

▲ MOUNTAIN CLIMBE R
Assume the press-up position, arms straight. Lift your right foot off the floor and raise your knee close to your chest. Touch the floor with your right foot. Return to start. Repeat with your left leg.

▲ SINGLE-ARM INCLINE ROW
Holding a dumbbell in one hand, lie face down on an incline bench. Pull the dumbbell toward your mid-section, keeping elbow close to your body, then lower the dumb-bell back to the start point.



◀ TURKISH GET-UP
Lie on your back with your legs held straight. Hold a dumbbell in your left hand, with your arm straight above your chest.
Stand up, keeping your elbow locked and the weight above you. Once you have done that, lie back down as you keep holding the weight above you. Switch hands and repeat the entire exercise.

TECHNOLOGY AND YOU

In this age of automation, arming yourself with the latest in tech is essential to stay two steps ahead of the rest. A look at some of the most futuristic gadgets to emerge this year.

If the turning point of evolution was the biological miracle of the opposable thumb, it is all you need today to launch a satellite into space. The spawn of technology has crept into our lives (for the better, obviously), and for every conceivable function, there is an equal and appropriate responsive device.

A gadget that you may deem unnecessary at this point of your life may become indispensible the day after tomorrow. Whether it is a 400-disc megachanger that eliminates the need for a DVD rack or a wristband mini-computer that records every step you take, technology has carved a place for itself in your life, and – try as you may – it cannot be brought down from this pedestal.

When outdoors, you could take along the Oregon 600, so you are never at a loss for direction, or the Breitling Emergency II – a device that saves lives as efficiently as it shows the time. The office has become an exciting place too, thanks to gadgets like the Asus Transformer Book Trio and the Lavazza Blue, and when you return home, it's to a personalised fortress that opens electronic doors and plays soothing jazz from automated music players to welcome its master.

The world has come a long way from family evenings before a grainy old television set. Whether it's a visor that doubles up as a hi-tech 3-D cinema screen to gaming consoles that take you to alternative realities where the imagination reigns supreme, entertainment gadgets are becoming personal to a fault.

Technology is here to stay and, in the circumstances, it's only sensible to make the best of it. We present the latest gadgets that make every sphere of your life simple.

WORK THAT TECH

Ready for your handy office upgrade? From hybrid laptops to projectors and coffee machines, here is an array of some of the coolest new hardware that will not only help grow your business but also make you look good while you're at it.

BY ANUSHREE BASU-BHALLA

Ergonomist's Corner

Our work culture may have traded in the plow and scythe for the phablet and projector to tend the digital fields, but it still is hard work. Hence, a chair that adjusts to your spine; a keyboard that breaks the straight-jacketed mould; a computer monitor that tells you when to take a break — these gadgets ensure that you don't get a sore back at the end of a long day's work.

Cuppa Bliss

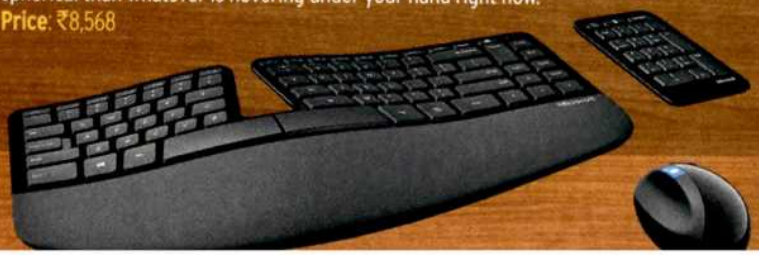
Feel like a double shot of espresso to get you charged up before a meeting? Try a cuppa from the **Lavazza Blue** plug-and-brew semi-automatic standalone coffee machine. It extracts the coffee with the patented capsule, using a pre-infusion process to give the espresso a more round, soft and creamy texture. The deceptively tiny Blue can make up to 200 cups a day.
Price: ₹2.75 lakh

Game of Thrones

In a world where most of the work has to be done sitting, discomfort can become all too commonplace. Hence, adjustability in accordance with one's comfort is the most important feature of a good office chair. The **Herman Miller Embody chair** features six adjustable elements (tilt limiter, seat height and depth, armrest height and width, and backfit). Rotation of a knob alters the shape of the seatback, enabling it to 'fill in' your lumbar. A spunky colour palette redefines the meaning of 'sitting pretty'.
Price: ₹1.05 lakh

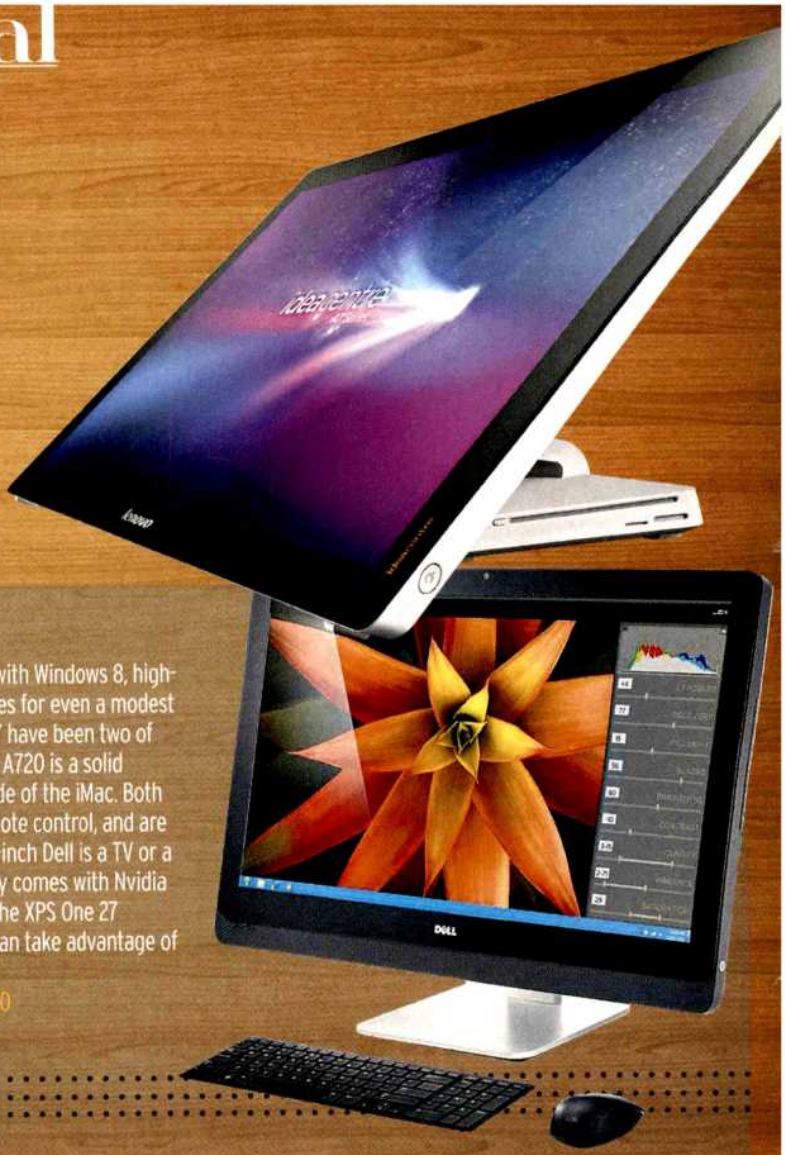
Breaking the Mould

Microsoft's latest computing peripheral, the **Sculpt Ergonomic Keyboard and Mouse**, not only spells an aesthetic upgrade but also ensures less strain due to typing, thanks to its manta ray shape. The wireless keyboard has a split design with a cushioned palm rest (imagine that!), an attachable riser and the option to bundle with a separate numeric keypad. The mouse has smooth curves and is more spherical than whatever is hovering under your hand right now.
Price: ₹8,568



Multimedia Maverick

No matter how user and mobility-friendly smartphones and tablets are, they can never replace laptops and the good old desktop in terms of functionality vis-a-vis accessing CDs, multitasking or creating and managing massive spreadsheets or graphic files. Presenting some of the best laptops, hybrids and all-in-one PCs released this year.



Fully-Loaded Geniuses

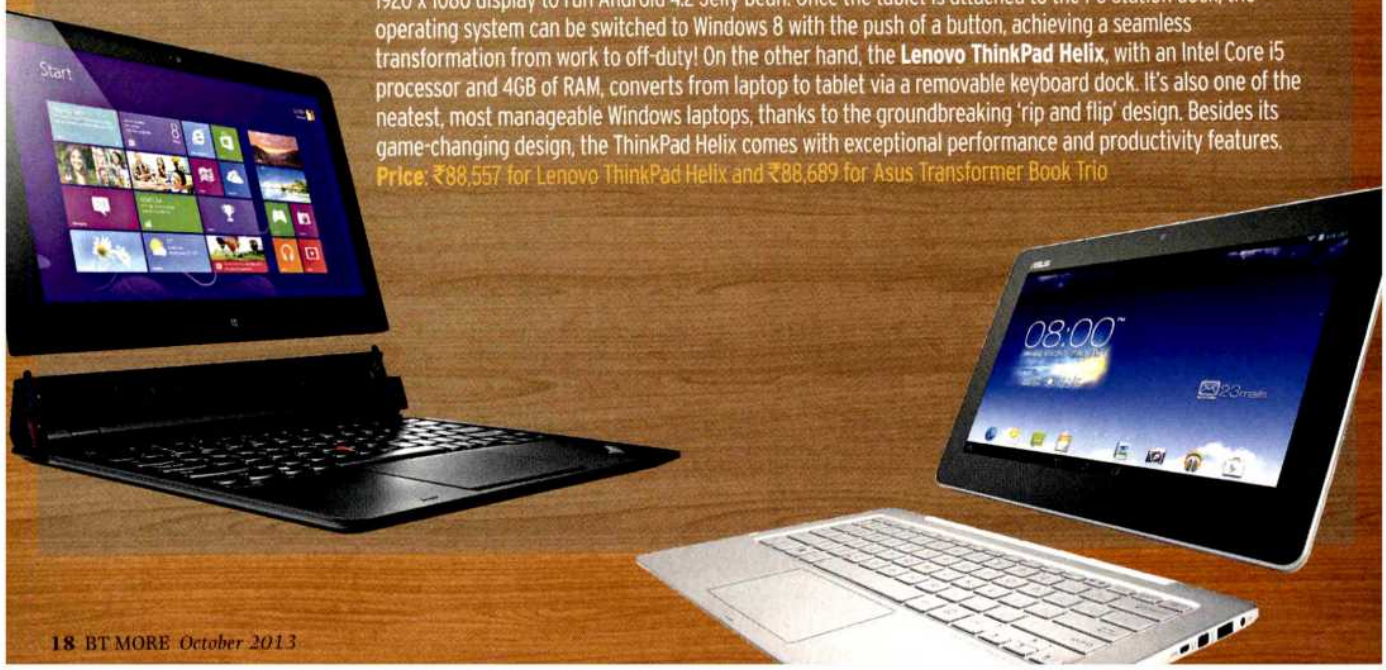
All-in-ones have more to offer than ever: effective touchscreens with Windows 8, high-def displays that can double up as TV screens, and slimmer profiles for even a modest office space. The **Lenovo Ideacentre A720** and **Dell XPS One 27** have been two of the most impressive all-in-one desktops this year. The Ideacentre A720 is a solid aluminum construction, the best of its kind in this segment outside of the iMac. Both the desktops are equipped with a TV tuner, Blu-Ray drive and remote control, and are ideal for playing games or editing videos. It's hard to tell if the 27-inch Dell is a TV or a PC, and perhaps that's the point. The 2560x1440 resolution display comes with Nvidia 2 GB graphics card, along with an Intel Core i7 processor. Bonus: the XPS One 27 benefits from optional touchscreen input – which means that it can take advantage of Windows 8's fingerworthy features.

Price: ₹1.31 lakh for Dell and ₹1.28 lakh for Lenovo Ideacentre A720

Double Indemnity

Speaking of ease of use, the new **Asus Transformer Book Trio** edition is easily the best a hybrid laptop can offer. Powered by a pair of Intel processors, this device is a three-in-one tablet / PC hybrid that runs on Windows 8 and Android. When using the tablet portion alone, a 2 GHz Intel Atom processor powers an 11.6-inch 1920 x 1080 display to run Android 4.2 Jelly Bean. Once the tablet is attached to the PC Station dock, the operating system can be switched to Windows 8 with the push of a button, achieving a seamless transformation from work to off-duty! On the other hand, the **Lenovo ThinkPad Helix**, with an Intel Core i5 processor and 4GB of RAM, converts from laptop to tablet via a removable keyboard dock. It's also one of the neatest, most manageable Windows laptops, thanks to the groundbreaking 'rip and flip' design. Besides its game-changing design, the ThinkPad Helix comes with exceptional performance and productivity features.

Price: ₹88,557 for Lenovo ThinkPad Helix and ₹88,689 for Asus Transformer Book Trio



Smart Paraphernalia

Business owners and tech-support workers rarely sing from the same hymn sheet. While one wants to bring up the productivity, the other thinks of running smoothly within the parameters of the budget. Here are some support devices that pack in the performance and the technology.

Super Projection

If you prefer your gizmos to be multifunctional, the Sony VPL-VW90ES 3D projector screen will fit your bill perfectly. While it sits at the high end of serious home-cinema projection (with its 3D Blu-ray and side-by-side 3D), it can also enter conference rooms with its fabulous high-def 2D.
Price: ₹5.34 lakh onwards

Sound Investment

Here's one for those last-minute out-of-office conference calls: the Plantronics Calisto 620 wireless speakerphone, which offers both VoIP and Bluetooth-calling in a compact form. Essentially, it turns your computer and phone into a call conferencing system – working with a rechargeable battery as well as a USB port.
Price: ₹11,656

Meeting Tracker

Looking for a hardware solution to record the minutes of a meeting? The Dev-Audio Microcone is a USB-powered array of microphones, all wrapped up in a little package. It comes with two pieces of software, one for managing the levels of the six microphones and another for recording your meeting on six different channels.
Price: ₹23,672

Printing Pet

Far-removed from its bulky and noisier cousins, the HP ENVY 120 e-All-in-One Printer is super sleek and befitting for your glassed-in corner office. In addition to standard printing, copying and scanning, the ENVY 120 prints from and scans to memory cards and USB keys, previewing images on its LCD screen before printing. With HP's Web apps, it enables cloud printing too.
Price: ₹16,419

Master Keys

Privacy and security have taken precedence in today's digital environment, especially when dealing with sensitive data at the workplace. Here are two unique devices that ensure secure office premises and protected business information.

Lock and Take Stock

The Portronics Greenlock is a tiny device that can be attached to your laptop/PC, protecting your sensitive files from unwanted access. When you wear the smart card and walk away from your system, your screen gets locked automatically. With this, you can also lock and unlock your screen when you are away from your system.
Price: ₹1,999

Surveillance Solution

Worried about strangers lurking in the dark? Presenting Netgear VueZone Wireless Night Vision IP Camera, a tiny surveillance device that can easily be added on to your personal video network. It detects moving subjects up to 15 feet and a wired infrared lamp that can illuminate up to 25 feet.
Price: ₹22,155

TECHIE TOYS

Knowing that a man's abode reflects his personality, would you call your pad a party animal's den or an obsessive gamer's battleground? Take your pick from these core entertainment gadgets and rest assured, home will never be the same again. BY ANINDITA SATPATHI

WITH THE WORLD AT YOUR fingertips, augmented reality is just another trigger of heightened senses — a feeling you can never have too much of. When fragmented moments and hyper-real images meld into one exhilarating experience, taking your breath away, don't you just love your gadgets and wish you had more of them?

Today, one look at the average gizmo-lover's room is enough to make us realise that we have come a long way from staring enraptured at grainy black-and-white televisions that were once our window to the world. Entertainment has become personal, and we now put our souls into palm-sized devices that can transport us to a virtual dimension with the simple push of a button. 'Idiot boxes' have become intelligent, obediently changing channels to the wave of a hand, and motion sensors have relegated remote controls to the background.

Today, you return from office to a den equipped with devices designed to soothe your frayed nerves.

These gadgets customise your personal space, effectively transforming it from a laidback bachelor pad to anything your techie heart desires — a cinema theatre screening a laugh-out-loud movie, a discotheque with bone-jarring yet crystal-clear music, or even an adrenaline-pumping gaming zone.

True, we are a restless generation addicted to constant updation — forever getting ahead of ourselves — but let's try to make the best of it. If gadgets are your thing of choice, get your swagger going with these.

Enter the Entertainers

Whether you are subjecting your opponents to Max Payne on your gaming console or simply watching movies streamed through the Net, make sure you have all the hi-tech essentials you need. Some gadgets without which your pad just wouldn't be complete.

Logitech's Driving Force GT

This racing wheel, customised for Gran Turismo 5 functions, has strong force feedback and convincingly simulates the racetrack feel, recreating bumps, crashes and traction loss. You can go 2.5 times around lock-to-lock with its 900-degree wheel rotation while gripping the 11-inch rubber overmold rim, which doesn't feel slippery even during the most intense of races. Bask in the feeling of sitting in the cockpit of an actual racecar while adjusting any of the set of 16 programmable buttons mid-race. The adjustable dial allows for different camera views and the pressure sensitivity of the ABS vibration is top-notch.

Price: ₹9,849

Razer Blade 14

This redesigned Razer Blade Gaming Ultrabook is a stunner, whether you look at it from the perspective of brute strength or studied elegance. The decidedly sleek device, touted as the world's thinnest gaming ultrabook, is your best bet if you are a gaming enthusiast. Housed in a stylish frame of less than an inch's thickness, the redesigned Blade is a dedicated gaming notebook packing 4th-generation Haswell Core i7, a 2GB NVIDIA GTX 765M video card, and a 256 GB SATA III Solid State drive. Completing the package is a display screen of 14.0" HD with 1600x900 resolution, Killer Wireless N WiFi, 8 GB of DDR3L memory and clear stereo sound bars. BioShock Infinite never felt more real between your fingers!

Price: ₹1.33 lakh

Sony 400-disc DVD Megachanger

While you are earnestly advised against becoming a couch potato, can you help it if this cool device excuses you from changing CDs, DVDs and blu-ray disks manually? As far as its audio and video aspects are concerned, the device is like a high-end standalone Blu-Ray player, providing 7.1 channel Dolby TrueHD and Dolby Digital Plus, DTS-HD High Resolution Audio and DTS-HD Master Audio decoding onboard, plus the ability to bitstream audio to a receiver through the HDMI port. Apart from delivering optimum video quality, the megachanger also facilitates snappy on-screen navigation. Definitely worth a buy if you own 400 disks.

Price: ₹1.95 lakh

D-Link Boxee Box

If you've had it with regular TV shows, here's the Boxee Box to your rescue. The chopped cube-shaped device – a part-wireless HD media player and part HD media streamer – sits pretty on a rubberised finish, preventing accidental slips. Its extensive movie library feature allows you to organise all your media, add episode data, and mark favourites for later viewing. It also automatically downloads movie and TV show information from the Internet, apart from supporting a host of add-in streaming applications. Its attractive user interface is complemented by a two-sided remote, with the direction pad on top and a QWERTY keypad at the bottom.

Price: ₹11,864

Sony PlayStation 4

The PS4, a potentially cloud-based entertainment system has become the epicentre of considerable hullabaloo and excitement prior to its eagerly-awaited launch in November. Even as gamers drool, Sony is on the verge of launching a winner – a veritable hardware genie device packed with a custom AMD chip, an eight-core CPU with 8GB of RAM and a GDDR5 unified system memory. Its stunning GPU and motion sensor gaming system, workable through the PS4 Eye, is enhanced by built-in speakers and the Dualshock 4 controller's capacitative touchpad. While prices have not been released for India, the package will be exclusive of the PS4 Eye.

Price: To be announced

Must-Haves for your Den

Liven up your living room with these exclusive audio and video gadgets that scream high quality.

Philips DJ Party Machine

Fitted with two dual rotatable docks that allow you to play, mix and scratch music from the machine's archives, this bulky sound system is the ultimate in-sound experience. The overwhelmingly retro look of the black-and-gold boombox is complemented by the 5.25" bass speakers, the small tweeter units nestling in between, and the rotating iPod docks on top. Its 300W power output produces the most blaringly elegant sound, supports instant bass and digital sound control, apart from adding a little disco glam to your house party. And the best part is, there is negligible sound distortion no matter how much you crank up the volume.

Price: ₹34,990

Bang and Olufsen BeoPlay A9

A veritable treat for the ears and the eyes, the BeoPlay 9 Nordic Sky Edition is a remodelled version of Bang and Olufsen's award-winning speakers. Its futuristic user interface allows you to connect the speakers wirelessly to your iPhone, iPad or iPod touch via AirPlay, and starts streaming data. Its delicate touch-sensitive tactile controls are a joy to the senses; swipe a hand across the touch sensor to control the volume or simply mute it by placing your hand on top. Available in pre-set sound modes for wall, corner or freestanding positions, optimising acoustic performance has never been so easy. The novelty of BeoPlay doesn't end here. Drawing inspiration from Scandinavian summer nights, the speakers come in different coloured light designs that change their shade and tone to match the mood & music in accordance with the sunlight – turning mild blue at twilight, a dark green shade at dawn, and reddish at dusk.

Price: ₹1.78 lakh

Samsung 75-inch HD 3D Television

The Samsung UN75ES9000 is a television that fits its lengthy name. The impressive 75-inch big-screen 1080p 240Hz 3D slim LED TV retains the voice and gesture-based smart interaction features of its ES8000 series, but almost attains perfection in black levels and sharpness. The TV's 0.31-inch rose gold-coloured bezel border distinguishes it from the usual black, and clear-finished look of most HDTVs, and a camera pops up from behind the bezel – letting users control the screen with gestures and video chat through Skype. Other features include two 15W speakers, downward-firing integrated WiFi, three HDMI ports, three USB 2.0 ports, an ethernet port, a digital audio output (optical), a 3.5-mm analog audio output, and a DVI audio input. TV is hardly the idiot box anymore, is it?

Price: ₹6.03 lakh

Debonair Flair

When you are not fiddling with these gadgets, they can be used to make quite a style statement. Neighbour's envy, indeed!

Kindle DX

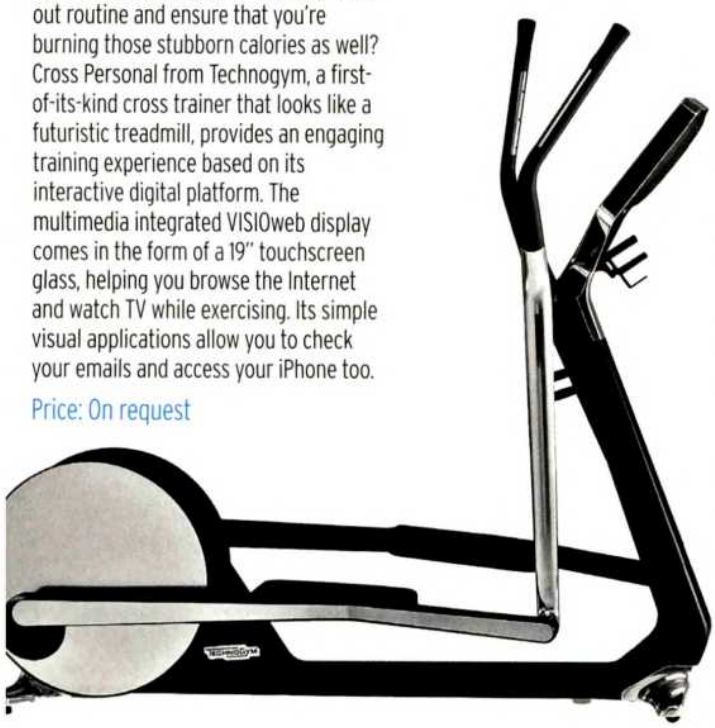
Amazon's big-screen e-reader with its 9.7-inch e-ink display and full keyboard at the bottom is a handy e-reader if you still swear by newspapers. This particular Kindle model is particularly suited to newspaper and textbook formats. Its high-capacity interface makes for a convenient e-reader if you're just lounging around and want to finish that book you've been lingering over for weeks. And if you need to check out a few work PDFs, it fits in fine in the DX's 3,500-book storage capacity. Also, it makes the perfect companion for a long day at the beach because of its anti-glare properties.

Price: ₹15,810

Technogym Cross-Personal Trainer with VISIOweb

How can you pep up your morning work-out routine and ensure that you're burning those stubborn calories as well? Cross Personal from Technogym, a first-of-its-kind cross trainer that looks like a futuristic treadmill, provides an engaging training experience based on its interactive digital platform. The multimedia integrated VISIOweb display comes in the form of a 19" touchscreen glass, helping you browse the Internet and watch TV while exercising. Its simple visual applications allow you to check your emails and access your iPhone too.

Price: On request



Tour V2 Slope Edition Rangefinder

This handy button-cute device from Bushnell is the world's smallest laser rangefinder with selective targeting modes and superb optical quality; it is every golfer's dream come true. Under the standard mode, without using the pinseeker, the range shows up after you aim at the target and push the button located at the top. The device has a 51,000 yard ranging performance. Using the pinseeker, which shows the closer of two objects and eliminates the background, the slope mode is enabled and gives estimates based on its calculation of the degree of elevation. If you have always been a GPS user on the golf course, give the rangefinder a try – you may be pleasantly surprised.

Price: ₹12,557

Silent 12-Bottle Wine Refrigerator

This wine cooling device's name may be a mouthful when you're explaining its functionality to delighted guests, but it does a great job of keeping your wine at just the right temperature. Its thermopane reflective smoke glass door and recessed handle make this miniature fridge so chic that you wouldn't really want to hide it away in a cluttered corner of the kitchen. An exterior digital touchscreen makes for effortless temperature control, and the device lives up to its name by cooling your extensive collection of red and white wines with practically no humming.

Price: ₹12,658

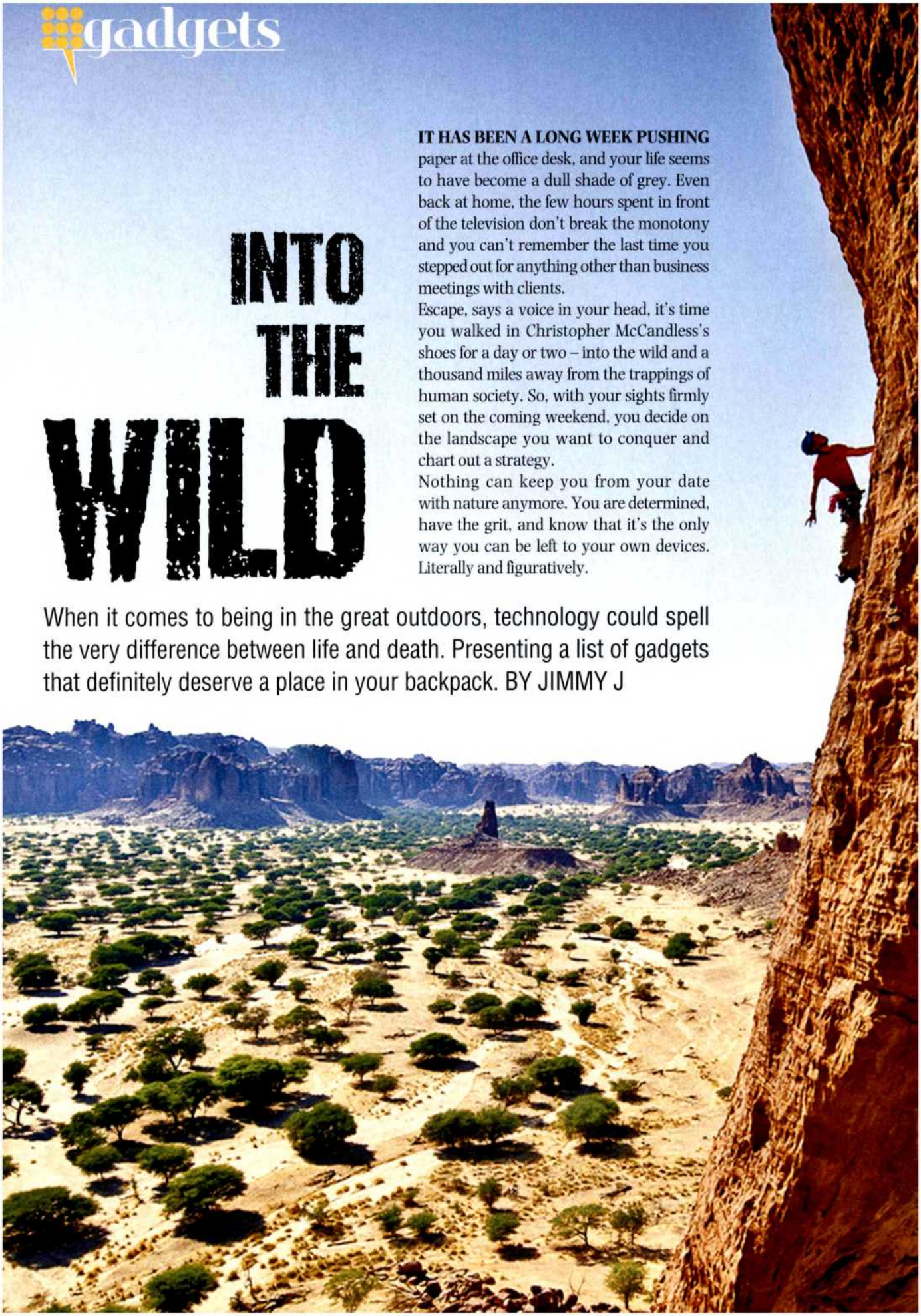
INTO THE WILD

IT HAS BEEN A LONG WEEK PUSHING paper at the office desk, and your life seems to have become a dull shade of grey. Even back at home, the few hours spent in front of the television don't break the monotony and you can't remember the last time you stepped out for anything other than business meetings with clients.

Escape, says a voice in your head, it's time you walked in Christopher McCandless's shoes for a day or two – into the wild and a thousand miles away from the trappings of human society. So, with your sights firmly set on the coming weekend, you decide on the landscape you want to conquer and chart out a strategy.

Nothing can keep you from your date with nature anymore. You are determined, have the grit, and know that it's the only way you can be left to your own devices. Literally and figuratively.

When it comes to being in the great outdoors, technology could spell the very difference between life and death. Presenting a list of gadgets that definitely deserve a place in your backpack. BY JIMMY J



When it's just you against nature, the Sony Xperia Z Ultra is your best bet for a companion.
Price: ₹44,599

CONNECTIVITY

You set off up the mountain trail the next weekend, and even as you feel dry sand crunching under the soles of your heavy trekking boots, you wonder if you have everything you may need in the case of an emergency. As much as one may admire the famous American supertramp and all the things he stood for, dying in an abandoned bus after eating a poisoned root may not be every man's idea of a happy ending.

Quite understandably, then, the item that should top your list of must-have devices is a cellular phone that will stand by you – come hell or high water. Taking this into consideration, we would recommend the Sony Xperia Z Ultra phablet – something that wouldn't be as basic as a normal mobile phone but may not be as cumbersome as a full-fledged tablet either. An extremely slim aluminum-glass device at 6.5 mm, it is powered by a 2.2GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 800 quad-core processor and runs on Android Jellybean.

So, what makes the Sony Xperia Z Ultra ideal for the great outdoors? Well, though it may seem quite bulky (after all, it's got a 6.44-inch screen), the phablet is quite easy to hold. Moreover, the Xperia Z Ultra has a screen made of tempered glass and enjoys an IP58 rating – which means that it is water as well as dust-proof, allowing you to take videos and photographs underwater.

DIRECTION SENSE

So, you have walked for miles into the wild, and the mountain trail you were following seems to have lost itself in the thick foilage. Even giving up and heading back home isn't an option; you can barely remember the route you have taken to reach the spot where you now stand. Time to dial 100 already? Probably not, if you remembered to pack the latest from the house of GPS giant Garmin. The Garmin Oregon 600, a sturdy handheld device that will ensure that you are never left directionless in what may seem like the middle of nowhere, comes with improved display and unlimited geocache storage – besides the option to use GLONASS satellites as well as standard GPS satellites, Bluetooth sharing, and an updated recording interface. A unit that fits snugly in the palm of your hand, the Oregon 600 benefits from thousands of downloadable maps and features a display that uses external light combined with an LED backlight to increase brightness without compromising on power. You don't have to worry about dropping it either – the manufacturers claim that even smashing the Oregon 600 against a rock won't result in anything other than minor cosmetic changes.

The sturdy Oregon 600 will ensure that you never lose your way in the mountains.
Price: ₹33,000

The Others

Waka Waka Solar Power Charger The Swahili term for 'Shine Bright', Waka Waka is an energy conservation device that is capable of fully charging a smartphone after roughly eight hours of solar light absorption. The little "eyes" on the front face can illuminate at three intensity levels after dark, and in case of emergencies, it even flashes S-O-S in morse code. Quite a handy device to have when you are stuck in the wild with a dead phone and a hot sun overhead.

SpareOne An AA battery-powered mobile phone, it helps facilitate one-touch emergency dialing and geo-location even without a SIM card. Housed in a sturdy case, it can operate in a weather operating range (-22F to 140F) that's far more extreme than a smartphone. And if your flashlight conks off in the middle of the night, the SpareOne's LED can keep you going for over 24 hours in the dark.

Swarovski 8x42 EL Rangefinder Binoculars 70008 Redefining the concept of hunting equipment, these field glasses from Swarovski combine the capability of razor-sharp top quality optics with precise measuring. Just the thing you would need to take a closer (but safer) look at a mountain lion scrambling up the rocks three kilometres away.

The Outsider Two-Man Tent, your portable fortress against the elements. Price: ₹8,099

HARDLY CAMPY

Trekking through the mountains can take its toll on a body otherwise accustomed to lazily lounging on a Herman Miller office chair, and taking cognizance of this very fact, you decide to set up camp the moment you spot a stream. Reaching into your backpack, you unpack the Outsider Two-Man Tent you had the good sense to bring along. Made of double-layered fabric that's sturdy and dependable yet lightweight, the tent is capable of protecting two persons (three can cram in too, in extreme circumstances) from elements of nature as diverse as dust storms and snow to torrential rainfall.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, MUSIC...

It's starting to get dark, and the skies thunder noisily before letting loose little droplets of rain. Smug in the knowledge that your little waterproof castle isn't going to let in the elements, you decide that it's time for a little music. But how do you get that in the middle of the woods, with the nearest plug point a little more than sixty kilometres away?

Out comes your Bose SoundLink Bluetooth Mobile Speaker II, capable of rocking the woods if you feel like it (the forest guards and animals may mind, though), and extending over a wireless range of up to 30 feet. Boasting of sound quality that only Bose can offer, this handy little speaker set has battery life of up to eight hours – what's more –you don't need a user manual to pair it with your phablet or mobile phone.

There! You got Simon and Art singing

Point-and-Shoot that animal with the retro-looking Fujifilm X100S. Price: ₹67,980

Sound of Silence live at Central Park even as the storm gathers momentum, and snuggled into your sleeping bag with a single electric light on, you feel like everything's right with the world again. And that's when you hear the sound of branches crackling outside, followed by a muffled roar. There are bears in these areas, aren't there? Heart thudding against

The Bose SoundLink Bluetooth Mobile Speaker II ensures that music remains your faithful companion on the go. Price: ₹24,638

the walls of your chest, you pick up your Maglite and tiptoe your way into the dark. These hairy beasts are known to enter tents for shelter during thunderstorms, and the last thing you need right now is an unwanted visitor.

As it turns out, there is no bear, the rustle had been caused by a wide-eyed Kashmir Stag – and he hasn't noticed you yet (The roar must have been the result of your imagination working overtime). Quick! A photo, before the deer makes a wild dash in the opposite direction.

Now, while we would ordinarily have suggested the Nikon D800 – with its groundbreaking 36.3 MP FX-format CMOS censor – for photographs, it is only natural that a good point-and-shoot camera should perform better at times like these. Your best bet, then, would be the retro-looking Fujifilm X100S with a hybrid viewfinder system that can toggle between a big, bright optical view and an EVF. A device that works wonders in low-lighting conditions, it delivers sharp edge-to-edge 16 MP photographs and still remains small enough to ease into the narrowest of denim pockets.

The Mio Alpha Heart Rate Monitor watch is EKG-accurate. Price: ₹14,500

FITNESS ON THE GO

It's morning, and as the sun starts crawling up the sky, you set off up the mountain trail again. In a few hours, you have exerted more energy than you would have in fifteen days, and you feel perspiration dripping down your neck and onto the ground.

Is it time for another swig of water already? Your HydraCoach Water Bottle indicates its agreement.

You may not know it, but vigorous exercise often delays the thirst mechanism – making it difficult to replace fluid loss without a plan for periodic consumption. HydraCoach automatically calculates, monitors and provides instant feedback on fluid consumption – making it just right for a rough outing sans medical supervision.

And the HydraCoach water bottle isn't the only medical expert that has been watching over you all this while; there's also the Mio Alpha Heart Rate Monitor watch, which "senses" the amount of blood under your skin and replies with a digital readout of your heart rate.

Been holding back on water intake? Fret not, your HydraCoachBottle will remind you. Price: ₹2,500

AND THEN, EMERGENCY

Well, the worst just happened. You were scaling a rock when you lost your footing and went tumbling into a deep rocky pit, and all you have now is a broken leg and no foreseeable way to climb up to the top again. You painfully reach into your backpack for your phablet only to find that it has run out of charge, and there's no network connectivity either. In other words – you are stuck in a hard place with a bad injury and little food, and nobody knows about your location.

Is it the end already? Maybe not, because it's then that you remember the attractive device strapped to your wrist.

It would be grossly inadequate to call the Breitling Emergency II something as relatively inconsequential as a watch. Enclosed in the Emergency II's titanium case is a PLB Category 2 beacon microtransmitter, capable of sending out a signal strong enough to alert authorities to your situation – no matter where you are.

Stuck between a rock and a hard place? Aron Ralston would have killed for the Breitling Emergency II.

Finally, the paramedics are here, and you can hear a rescue helicopter chopping the air overhead. And as they lower a line, you mouth a silent thanks to the electronic angels that have been watching over you through the perilous journey.

They say machines will take over the world one day, but aren't you glad they are around to save our lives till then?

JET, SET, GO

No longer does the corporate traveller throw on his coat and rush to the nearest airport with only his clothes and toothbrush. Some tech essentials for your travels abroad.

TEXT BY JIMMY J

1. Asus Taichi 31

Why settle for a single HD IPS screen when you could have two? Asus answers this pertinent question with an innovative portable computer called the Taichi 31. The world's first dual-screen notebook and tablet combination, this 1.5-kg device is powered by 3rd generation Intel Core i7-3517U processors – making it just what the doctor ordered for corporate presentations as well as on-the-go entertainment. Price: ₹1,39,999

2. iPhone 5

Gone are the days when the corporate world used to swear by Research in Motion's cellular offerings – the iPhone 5 is the business executive's best friend now. Though 20 per cent lighter than its predecessor, the iPhone 5 does not compromise on toughness and stands 123.8mm tall to allow for a brilliant 4-inch retina display screen. Add to that the improved design and the all-new Apple-design A6 chip, which increases CPU performance without eating into battery life, and you have a winner in your hands. Price: ₹51,490

3. Portronics Scanny 4

Need an important document scanned and sent back to your office, but there's no imaging system in the vicinity? Don't start panicking yet – there's a reason why we stuffed the Portronics Scanny 4 into your briefcase. Touted as the world's most advanced portable scanner, you just have to move the device over the surface of a photograph or document to get it converted into JPG or PDF files. A minute LCD screen on the scanner gives you a glimpse of the images, and a USB port facilitates easy transfer of the soft copies to your laptop. Price: ₹5,200

4. Dell M410HD mobile projector

While conference halls usually come with projectors, you can hold impromptu presentations for clients (without forcing them to huddle over your small laptop) if you are equipped the latest Dell M410HD mobile projector. With its lightweight design, HD capability and flexible connectivity options, this projector offers an ideal solution for professionals who need to make powerful presentations while staying on the move. Price: ₹64,347

5. Vacheron Constantin Patrimony Traditionnelle World Time

If you are a jet-setter who couldn't be bothered with resetting your clock everytime you touch down in a strange land, the Patrimony Traditionnelle World Time could be just the watch for you. Made of 18-carat 5N pink gold with a three-part dial in metal and sapphire, the Patrimony Traditionnelle World Time is an exquisite self-winding instrument of excellence that displays 37 time zones and possesses a useful day-night indicator. But the question is – can your wrist handle the attention? Price on demand

6. Quick Heal AntiVirus Pro 2013

Having a high-end laptop with the latest in software goodies will hardly help if you do not have a good anti-virus program protecting it. Quick Heal AntiVirus Pro safeguards your computing device from malicious threats that could sneak into your system while browsing the Internet, checking mails or even chatting. The software also provides security against new and unknown threats without slowing down your laptop. Price: ₹799

7. Livescribe WiFi Smartpen Pro

So you have been taking notes at this important business meet, but the fatigue from last night's red eye flight made you zone out for a minute or two. Enter the Livescribe WiFi Smartpen 8 GB Pro. Even as you write, the inbuilt microphone in the smartpen makes crisp recordings of the proceedings, then automatically sends the data to your free Evernote account for storage and playback. And what's more, its sleek black physique looks anything but gimmicky. Write on, mister. Price: ₹28,000

8. Energizer AP1201

Without a reliable battery pack in your suitcase, you aren't ready to travel. Enter the Energizer AP1201, a rechargeable silicone case with built-in battery that will make sure your iPhone is always full of life. More power to you. Price: ₹1,999

column

Home Smart Home

Soon, residential spaces will become as intelligent as the people who live in them. So, are we ready for the future?

NANDAGOPAL RAJAN

IF YOU HAVE A WALLET THAT'S EXPENDABLE, IT IS very easy to set up a home that is automated and can almost be remote controlled. Spend on a contract upwards of Rs 3.5 lakh and companies will offer complete home automation solutions that make your new house smart enough to keep out intruders, and nimble enough to let the light in or keep it out, without you actually doing anything.

Tagged as the quintessential smart homes in their sales pitch, truth be told, these homes are anything but smart if you know where our lives are headed in the not-so-distant future. The real smart homes of the future won't need its residents to do anything. Sensors that run across the walls and floors will gauge dips in temperature, know if you have a visitor staying over for the night, and even understand when you are having a bad day! These homes will be smart because they will be able to act on the gigabytes of data being generated across the home. So, as the temperature dips, the smart devices will up the thermostat and even play a soothing jazz number to ease work-related stress. And for that extra guest, it will have a warm bath drawn even before he is up. How's that for coolness?

But that perfect smart home is still a few years in the making and till such time when your turf gets fully automated, you will have to make do with central controllers that take commands from you, or a mobile device, and execute the same across the home. Ultra-smart devices like the Android-powered Samsung T9000 fridge, which can be imported, makes managing your kitchen very simple thanks to features like displaying recipes from the net on its LCD screen and running your favourite smartphone apps.

We, however, seem to have a fetish for security and don't really think beyond doors with automated locks that can be opened from inside even as you view who the visitor is on a security screen powered by Zicom. New home security systems can send alerts to phones every time there is an unforeseen movement in the house or there is a need to open the door remotely for someone to come in.

Smart homes are also essentially energy efficient homes. Sensor-based lights switch off as soon as they detect that there is no one around and light up as someone walks in. Similar sensors can also switch off all appliances that are running when not needed. Just this energy saving is enough to cover the cost of the investment in a couple of years.

According to some estimates, about 14 billion of the 19 billion connected devices in t he world by the end of this year will be non-consumer machines like security cameras and air conditioners. So what happens when they start talking among themselves? To start with, the coffee machine will know when the toast is ready and will pour out you cappuccino as the bread pops out. But before the entire home becomes super smart it wouldn't know if you really want to have either the coffee or your toast.

However, the connected home is also a security threat of a new kind. For those with malicious intent, a home that talks to devices or networks outside provides an open window for unsolicited entry. Protecting such homes will be one of the new challenges for security agencies, especially since it will be hard to convince users to have a firewall for an oven or a refrigerator.

The author is an associate editor with Business Today

CORUM
LA CHAUX-DE-FONDS · SUISSE

Admiral's Cup AC One 45 Chronograph.

A sophisticated new design for a flagship collection

Inspired by its nautical origins, the Admiral's Cup collection welcomes a new line resolutely anchored in the contemporary era: AC-One. Sailing onto the scene with an innovative case developed by Corum, this newcomer cut out for great achievements asserts an eminently virile style that makes it a must-have on the contemporary watch scene. Spotlight on the Admiral's Cup AC-One 45 Chronograph, an accessible mechanical model combining power, elegance and performance.

With the launch of the AC-One line, Corum is writing a new chapter in the history of its iconic Admiral's Cup born in 1960. While its lines have been redesigned, the identity codes that have forged the legend of this horological icon have been jealously safeguarded. The bezel of the Admiral's Cup AC-One 45 Chronograph takes the original twelve-sided shape, while the 45 mm-diameter case is more strongly rounded than ever, within an integrated structure combining polished and satin-brushed finishes.

The construction is built on several layers, with black PVD-coated titanium inlays alternating between the back and the middle and then between the bezel and the middle, in a perfectly mastered play on volumes. The slimmer technical, contemporary case made of grade 5 titanium houses the automatic CO 132 chronograph caliber, also powering a date display. The movement revealed through the sapphire crystal caseback features an original openworked and black PVD-coated oscillating weight. The latter's circular shape occupies the entire surface of the caseback opening and proudly proclaims its contemporary nature.

Stemming from lengthy aesthetic research conducted in-house, the Admiral's Cup AC-One 45 Chronograph highlights an innovative and exclusive split pomegranate dial motif. Composed of tiny diagonally incised squares creating a raised pattern accentuated by the inner bezel ring bearing the famous nautical pennants, the unmistakable signature of the Admiral's Cup collection. Like the openworked and faceted hands, the applied hourmarkers are coated with beige Superluminova, while the chronograph sweep-seconds hand bears the iconic Corum key.

Sporty, powerful and water-resistant to 300 meters, the Admiral's Cup AC-One 45 Chronograph offers an appealing set of performances. Fitted with an crocodile leather strap or a grade 5 titanium bracelet fastened by a triple folding clasp, this model is interpreted in different versions. It comes in a two-tone interpretation when its titanium case – whether black PVD-coated or not – is topped by an 5N 18kt red gold bezel, or else opts for an all titanium construction.

Thomas Cook's focus on foreign exchange has been inspirational:

As inventor of travellers cheques in 1874, to its innovative diversity: currency notes in 26 global currencies, travelers cheques, drafts & wires, prepaid forex cards, Send Money Abroad, Student U-Special, wholesale forex, Inward Remittances and its new Borderless Card.

TCIL has leveraged technology to launch its innovative Forex-On-the-Go portfolio, with its Online Forex Store, via call, SMS or a tweet and the convenience of home delivery.

Its consumer empowering Borderless Prepaid Card, a unique multi-currency card (8 major global currencies) is a first mover in the India non bank space. Given Its strong benefits of saving cross currency exchange charges, avoiding hassles of carrying money, inbuilt chip & pin protection for added security and global access, the card has seen impressive demand.

For the increasing last minute traveller, TCILs 23 airport counters offer valuable destination currencies.

With a footprint of 218 outlets, TCIL brings Forex services right to its travelers doorstep!

Madhavan Menon, Managing Director, Thomas Cook (India) Ltd. said, "At Thomas Cook India, our Foreign Exchange business has always been consumer led. As inventors of Travellers Cheques and today's market leader, we owe it to our valued customers to deliver empowering customer centric innovation. Our unique Borderless Prepaid Card has revolutionized the Forex market, and backed with new offerings in the online space, we want our customers to Travel Smooth!"

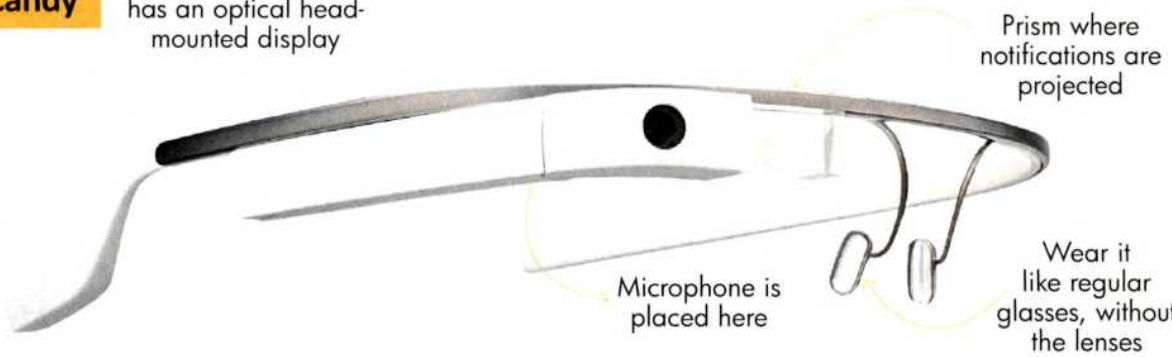
TECH YOU CAN WEAR

With hi-tech visors and smartwatches, technology is coming closer to us than ever

TECHNOLOGY IS SO intrinsic to our lives that it is becoming a part of our bodies too. While it may be overkill to turn into Iron Man and take it upon yourself to save the world, many gadgets are now meant to be strapped, belted and buckled to your body. On-your-eye LCD Google Glass may be the most talked-about gadget owing to the sheer brilliance of its conceptualisation, but it's not alone in its ingenuity. Technology has pervaded every facet of our being, with smart watches and shoes fitted with mini-computers mapping data directly from our bodies. **Nandagopal Rajan** looks at how constant quantification and updation can be simplified through wearable gadgets.

Eye Candy

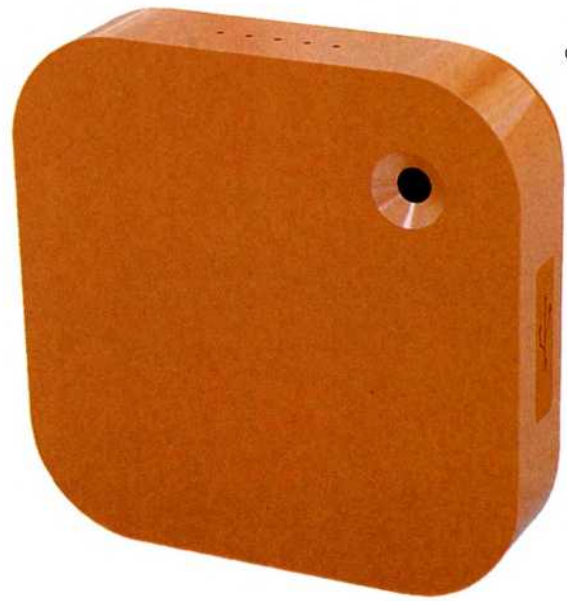
Google Glass has an optical head-mounted display



If Google Glass pretty much kills the smartphone with its call, surf, record and share features, we are yet to see the transition on a mass scale, an unlikely possibility in the near future. Giving competition to Google Glass are Epson Moverio BT, a personal video viewer that lets you access and browse the web while being aware of your surroundings, and the Sony HMZ-T2, an on-eye viewer that gives the best 3D video experience without actually sitting in a theatre. The glasses have two individual OLED panels that adjust pixel light emissions to zero for deep black and stunningly beautiful high-contrast images. Also on the way is the Oculus Rift, a 3D virtual gaming user-friendly headset, pre-orders for which are piling up.

Autographer can be hung around the neck

It has sensors that decide when to click



Memoto is almost invisible and clips on anywhere

The tracker in **FitBit Flex** can be pulled out

Nike Fuel was among the first fitness bands

Jawbone Up can track sleep as well

The World Above Your Fist

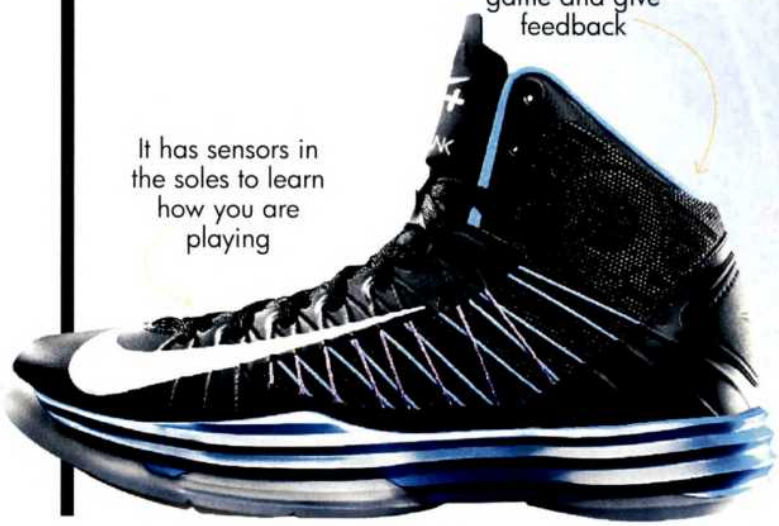
Activity trackers are one of the most common examples of wearable technology. They store data about you and analyse it using smartphone apps. The Nike Fuel Band, Jawbone Up and Fitbit Flex – which are becoming popular in the US and other countries -- typically track your physical activity and tell you if you are reaching your fitness goals. The Up, for instance, lets users track food-and-drink consumption, and has sensors to gauge how much sleep you have had.

Power Your Step

Smart shoes no longer mean dapper and spit-polished footwear. Now it means sneakers that track your every step, alter in accordance with your energy levels and pack in accelerometers, gyroscopes and pressure sensors. Yes, they can be used to walk or run as well. While Nike is an old player, Google is entering new territory in its tie-up with Adidas to create smart shoes that will include a speaker to broadcast messages. Nike's Hyperdunk+ uses the Nike+ tracking technology to provide real-time tracking and coaching to users through links to the Nike+ Basketball app.

Hyperdunk+ can track your game and give feedback

It has sensors in the soles to learn how you are playing



Looxcie HD streams 720p video

Clip On 'n' Shoot!

A wearable camera is nothing new. It is easy to get hold of spy cameras that snoop from the security of your pocket or a buttonhole. These new wearable cameras, however, are more about chronicling your life and less about spying. GoPro, the most popular chronicler of our times has gone places and seen wonders but it is still just too big. These brooch-like clip-ons from Memoto, for instance, capture a picture every 30 seconds so that you don't miss out a single moment in your life. Then there is the Autographer from UK-based OMG Life, which claims to be the first intelligent camera that can "enable spontaneous, hands-free image capture". This camera has a unique 136-degree eye view lens that clicks images that look like they have been shot using a fish-eye lens. Another interesting device is the Looxcie HD, which livestreams 720p video from atop your ears – aided by Wi-Fi through an app on your phone.

Kindle your Imagination

The Paperwhite is finally here, and it is leaving no page unturned to make an impact on the Indian reader

TEXT BY SIMAR SINGH

THE SWOON-WORTHY KINDLE Paperwhite has finally been launched in India. Battling multi-functional tablets' threat to permanently pull stand-alone e-book readers off the shelf, Amazon's Kindle Paperwhite shines and firmly carves its place under the sun.

The look is well-crafted. Sleek and stylish with a matte, scratch-proof black exterior, the only downside is its tendency to retain fingerprints. The Paperwhite is incredibly light, weighing approximately 212 grams with a six-inch display screen, making it handy to hold and use, allowing one to bypass the unpleasant experience of sore wrists after extensive usage. The screen's E-Ink display comes together with an easy-to-regulate front light, which is not harsh on the eyes; it allows the Kindle to disappear in your hand, leaving you with the text. Who said e-books were not a patch on the real thing? The high-res capacitive touch with its mildly granulated or matte layering, gives traction to improve the feel, giving greater control over the touch and disallowing accidental strokes. The battery life is phenomenal; it can run up to 13 hours with continuous usage, with the Wi-Fi on.

Bookmarks, definitions and regular features are packed in along with an estimate of time left to finish a chapter or the book, based on the reader's speed, visible at the bottom of the page.

Another novelty is the x-ray feature, which has been developed in every new Kindle release, allowing one to view what Amazon describes as 'bones of a book'. Roughly, this allows users to see passages across certain x-ray-enabled books that mention reccurring ideas, characters, places, etc, creating an overview map of sorts. Users can access character overviews and passages where they feature, besides information on non-fictional places, to supplement the reading experience.

A nice surprise is the zero power consuming screensaver, which comes on every time you turn off the device. Another new feature is the experimental browser, which allows for basic internet surfing.

While much smoother and easier to use than its predecessors, even with this upgraded device the transition from one page to another is not seamless and is often accompanied by a flicker. This becomes particularly stark while browsing through graphic novels, with a slight watermark-like hint of the previous page remaining visible for some seconds.

The Kindle Paperwhite, however, is a must-have for casual readers as well as tech and book junkies. The more I used it, the more I appreciated the product. For dedicated Kindle users, this is an upgrade worth putting your money into. It is available in Wi-Fi as well as Wi-Fi + 3G models, and retails at ₹10,999 and ₹13,999 respectively.

VICTORINOX
SWISS ARMY

MAVERICK, 4 colours mark a new style

A contemporary wind has brought new changes to the Maverick of 2013. The watch now has a restyled and refined dial emphasizing readability, and the collection has a cast of bold new colours: chocolate, green, blue and red, mostly in monochrome. The Maverick remains true to the codes and values of Victorinox Swiss Army, while leveraging these to assert a stronger and more audacious identity: among the offers is a two-tone bracelet (steel/gold PVD) and a gold PVD-coated steel case.

All versions are powered by Swiss Made Ronda quartz movements. While the Maverick retains some of its sporty character, it also explores new territories, expressing a more urban character, marked in particular by mostly monochrome tones.
The colours are emblematic of the style that the brand has been championing for several years now. This year, other colour combinations are also ventured, such as a gold PVD-coated steel case, and a two-tone metal bracelet in steel and gold PVD.
Website: www.victorinox.com; Email: info@victorinox.in

Turkish Airlines
2013 Best Airline in Europe

Established in 1933 with a fleet of only 5 airplanes, Star Alliance member Turkish Airlines, the national flag carrier Airline of Turkey, headquartered at the Ataturk Airport in Istanbul is today a four star airline.

With a fleet of 233 aircrafts (passenger and cargo) it currently operates scheduled services to 196 international and 41 domestic airports, serving a total of 237 cities in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas as of September 2013. With an increase to 103 destination countries, the carrier's destination network from one hub is the world's largest.The airline is 3rd biggest carrier in the world by number of destinations.

In 2012 Turkish Airlines carried 39 million passengers with total revenues of $9.0 billion. It is expected to reach 46 million passengers by the end of this year. In 2013 Turkish Airlines has been named as "Best Airline in Europe", the third year running by Skytrax and continued to be "Best Airline in Southern Europe" for the fifth consecutive year.

One of the fastest growing airline companies,it has received several "Passengers Choice awards from the consumer ranking group,Skytrax. Having the designation of "Worlds Best Economy Class On-Board Catering" in 2010, Turkish Airline has been awarded "Business Class Catering" in 2013 Skytrax World Airline Awards. Celebrating the 10th year in India, Turkish Airlines offers daily flights from Mumbai and Delhi.
www.turkishairlines.com

Polaris RZR XP 900

Here's one for the roadie in you. All-Terrain-Vehicle maker, Polaris upped the ante by launching its powerhouse RZR XP 900 HO Jagged X Edition side-by-side, giving adventure-seekers the chance to rip dunes, explore trails and conquer rock faces with a high-powered, premium-spec machine that features 88 HP, Dual OverHead Cams (DOHC), four large valves for high RPM power and 180 degree crank shaft for balanced performance. Hit the road, Jack!

Price: ₹24.5 lakh

Tod's Winter Gommino

Simplicity and functionality are the focal points of these Tod's Winter Gommino lace-up boots. Made with hand-brushed subtle suede and complemented by a thick rubber pebble sole, they come in a range of funky colours that will add spunk to your wardrobe outside of work.

Price: On request

Mulberry Ted Bag

Messenger bags are versatile which is why they are ideal travel companions, especially if you are a high-flying businessman who is always on the go. Mulberry offers a particularly sleek unlined leather number with detachable strap, which can be used as both a briefcase and a backpack.

Price: £ 930 (₹93,152 approx)

Miranda Watkins Gleam Carafe and Tumbler Set

Be a distinguished host as you invite colleagues and friends over with this glossy Gleam carafe set that will make a chic ornament at the end of your bar. Crafted from stunning pewter, the reflective set includes an elegant carafe, two shapely tumblers and a cork based tray. Available on order at www.mirandawatkins.com

Price: £295 (₹30,556 approx)

Engraved Brooks Saddle Bicycle Seats

Collectors of quirky, pay attention. UK-based leather artisan Kara Ginther creates beautiful Brooks saddles that are exquisite, hand-carved, and yet work well on a rough ride. Pedal away during your off-duty hours as you take off on one of the trails with fellow cycling enthusiasts. Made to order at www.karaginther.com.

Price: On request

Paul Smith Bow Ties

Put an individual spin on social engagements with this Paul Smith men's burgundy and teal twin silk bow tie with a cream polka dot pattern. The textured woven silk and retro design will bring a touch of the label's quintessential British hedonism to your tuxedo.

Price: On request

Creed Millessime 1849

Creed's Millessime 1849 is a quintessentially British fragrance with citrus freshness, warming up to jasmine, cedar and lingering powdery woods. This rich, sweet, aromatic fragrance evokes the old era's opulence and élan.

Price: £225 (₹22,897) for 75ml

Ringl Fine Carbon Jewellery for Men

A distinctive piece of bling can be a great conversation starter. Consider this fine carbon fibre jewellery collection, by Ringl. This exquisite collection has been handcrafted in Austria with utmost precision, giving it the opulence it rightly deserves.

Price: Starts from $2,300 (₹1.47 lakh)

A Taste of Mughlai

Go on a date with the exotic at Dilli 32, Shahdara. BY KARUNA JOHN

TO THOSE NOT LIVING THERE, IT MAY SEEM an arduous drive to Delhi-110032 in Shahdara, an area not really known for its gastronomic greatness. But then that was before East Delhi's business district became home to the uber-luxurious Kempinski Ambience Hotel.

The high towers here showcase the best of the decadent interpretations of Mughal and Avadhi cuisines in the city. The gastronomic feast that unfolds at the Kempinski's Indian cuisine restaurant Dilli 32, named after the area pin code, is delicate in its presentation of heritage dishes created in its open kitchen's tandoors, tawas and handis.

We recommend you begin with the shahi galawat ke kebab, medallions of lamb minced and marinated into a silken-like pate, and served on golden parantha disks. Though this may be just a starter, it can hold its own even when faced by the worthy main course of the nehari gosht. Warm spices add depth of flavour sans chilli heat to the slow-cooked shanks, perfect for a cooler autumn evening, in contrast to the rampuri ishtew's white gravy – which is light on the palate and best for lunch on a warm day.

Gucchi zafrani
Nehari gosht

Meal for two:
₹4,000 (alcohol extra)

Dilli 32, Kempinski Ambience Hotel

011-30146022

Interestingly, even meat eaters are likely to swoon over the vegetarian offerings at Dilli 32. A case in point is the lush shakahari kheechra, which constitutes rice, pulses, vegetables and spices simmered to a buttery, warm comforting one-di sh meal. Or you may want to try the gucchi zafrani, rare Kashmiri morels in spicy gravy best paired with fresh-from-the-tandoor Kashmiri naan.

You may pore over the dessert section at the end of the feast, but if you have to order any one thing, it should be the green mirch ka halwa – a bell-pepper-meets-sweet khoya dish that deserves a standing ovation. Go on, lick your digits, no one is judging.

Dilli-32's cozy interiors perfectly complement the delicacies on offer ▲

The elegant minimalist decor of Le Bistro du Parc has a decidedly European vibe ▲
The tarte au citron a.k.a. lemon tart ▶

French Kiss

Want to unwind after a long day? Head to Le Bistro du Parc for a quaint dining experience. BY ANINDITA SATPATHI

PERFECTLY ENCAPSULATING THE LAID-BACK ambience of a European eatery, the Le Bistro du Parc at Moolchand Market lures you with its promise of honest cooking. The bistro presents a unique rendition of French soul food – making it the perfect dining option at the end of a stressful week. Its elegant minimalist décor has a decidedly European vibe, while the soft lighting creates a pleasant illusion of roominess.

The menu is experimental, almost to a fault. Replacing the usual hand-out menu cards are huge blackboards – with the day's entrees, main course and desserts scrawled on them in English and French. The exotic entrees have alarmingly unfamiliar names but are surprisingly good once you shrug off their foreign-ness.

The first dish to arrive was a refreshingly dainty midinette salad with roasted chicken chunks, celery and green apple juliennes, brightened with a scattering of pomegranate seeds. The red pepper terrine – a melt-in-the-mouth miniature pyramid of aubergine and red pepper mousse paired with translucent marinated zucchini – was a delectable work of art.

Pan-fried calamari
Red snapper

Meal for two
(alcohol extra)
₹1,800

Moolchand Market,
New Delhi

011-46780080

The pan-fried calamari impressed upon me that the French have a way with seafood, and the next course of red snapper only reinforced the realisation. The calamari – tossed with cherry tomatoes, black olives, baby potatoes, garlic and a hint of chili – was a riot of colours, yet the clean flavour of the main ingredient remained intact. The red snapper, crusted golden on the outside and served with lime foam on a ratatouille bed of red and yellow peppers, had just a muted hint of tanginess and is also recommended if you are a fish-lover. However, the vegetarian main course of courgettes stuffed with pilaf rice and mozzarella in a bed of tomato puree was bland; clearly putting together vegetarian dishes is not a priority.

For dessert, I had a lemon tart that more than lived up to my expectations with its crunchy base layered with fragrant lemon mousse and topped with meringue. A plum almond tart, a flirtatious blend of tangy plums and sweetened nuttiness with a drizzling of plum sauce, was the perfect end to the meal. Highly recommended when you yearn for a slice of France!

Racing Ahead in Time

TO COMMEMORATE AND CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF ITS LAUNCH, THE ROLEX OYSTER PERPETUAL Cosmograph Daytona was launched at Baselworld 2013. Made entirely in 950 platinum and equipped with a chestnut brown monobloc cerachrom bezel along with an ice-blue dial, the watch is perhaps the ideal one to measure average speeds of up to 400 miles/hour. Its 40mm oyster case adds robustness and elegance and makes it waterproof to a depth of 100 metres. The Cosmograph Daytona is also equipped with calibre 4130, a certified Swiss chronometer developed entirely by Rolex that makes sure you get perfect precision and stability even when exposed to temperature variations and shocks. What makes this new version of the Cosmograph Daytona even more special is that it is the Official Timekeeper for Formula One as part of Rolex's association with the motorsport event. The watch has been specially designed for all the fans and lovers of motorsport. Price on request.

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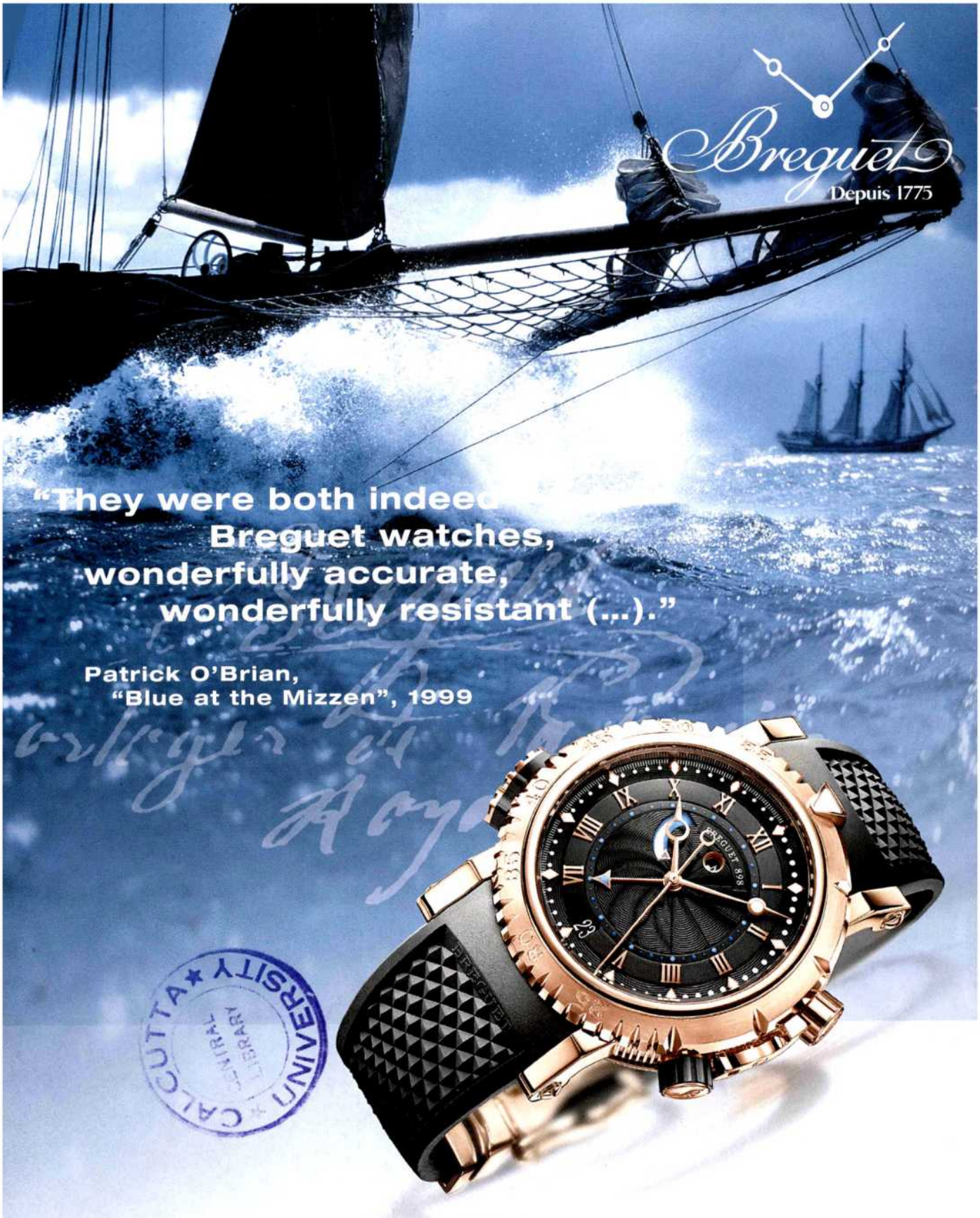

Marine Royale - Automatic Alarm - 5847BR

Bangalore: Ethos Summit, tel: 080 41130611/12 **Chennai:** The Helvetica, tel: 044 28464096/97
Kolkata: Exclusive Lines, tel: 033 22820626 **Hyderabad:** Meena Jewellers, tel: 040 23237170
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THE JETSETTER

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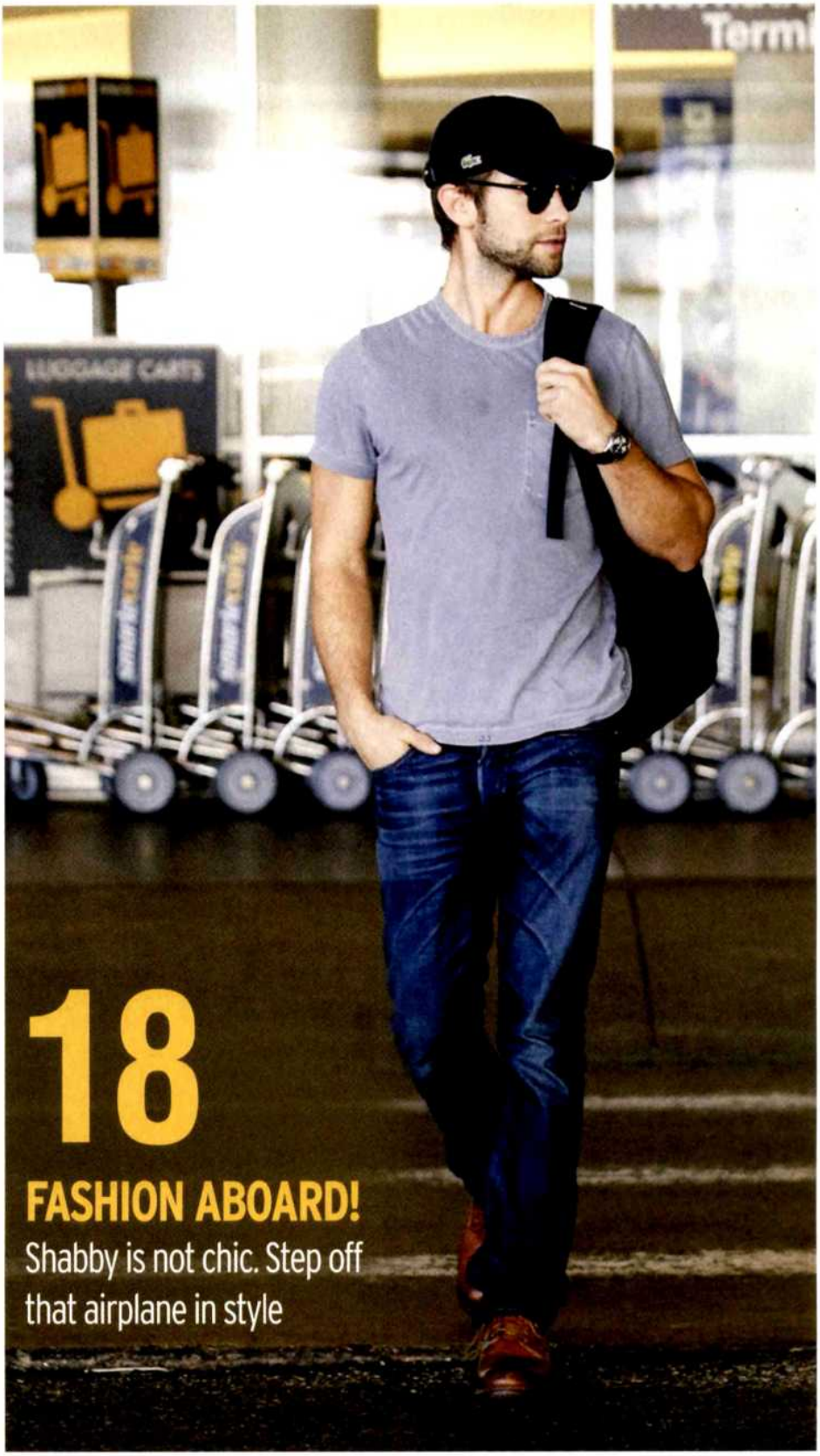

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FASHION ABOARD!

Shabby is not chic. Step off that airplane in style

INDIA TODAY GROUP

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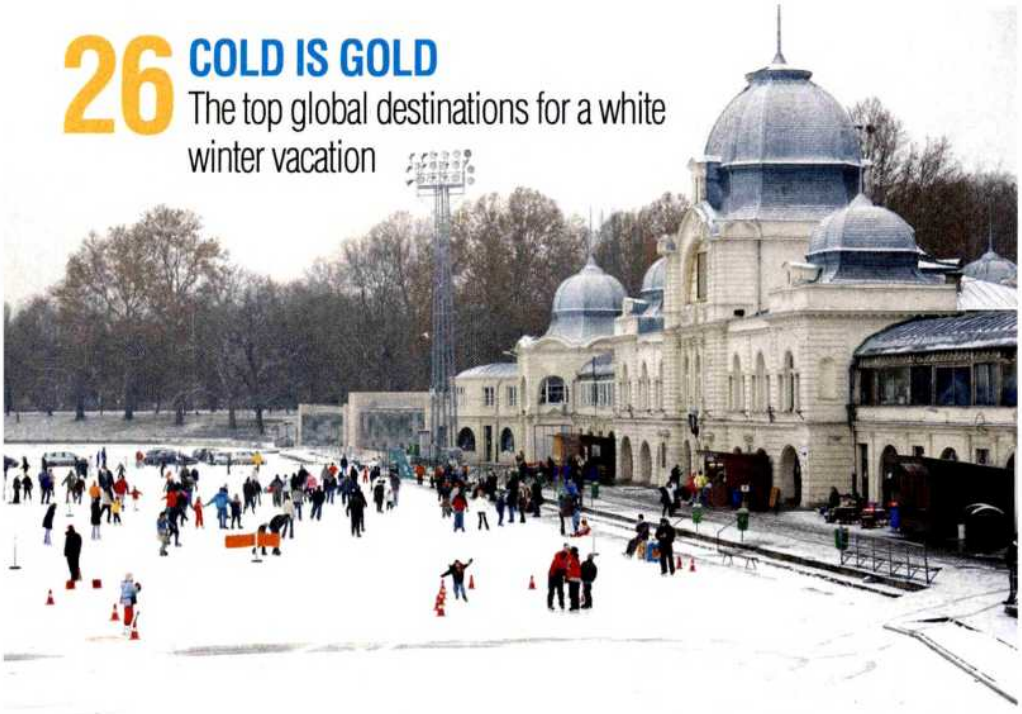

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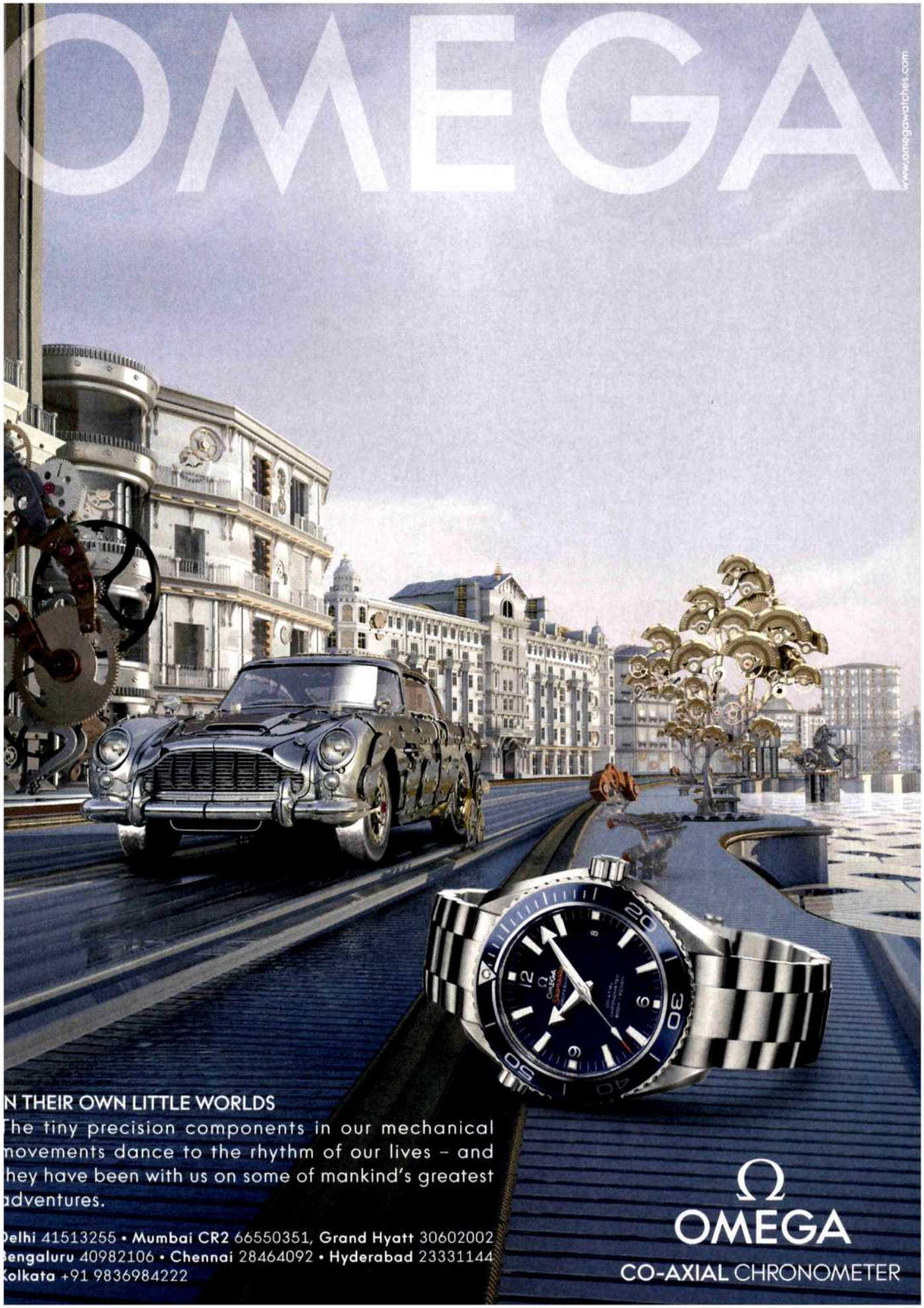
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Hammer the Deal

Christie's auctioneer Hugo Weihe elaborates on how bidding at an auction can be a fun and fulfilling experience.

PICK YOUR PIECE

Prior to an auction, attend the exhibition where the pieces are displayed to get an insight into their details, and have first-hand knowledge of their exact condition. As a potential bidder, fully make use of the opportunity to take a close look at the pieces — feel them, peruse the catalogue and talk to auction house specialists regarding the source and heritage of the product. Feel free to quiz the auctioneers at length on the merits and potential value of each piece, so you get a neutral evaluation of all the pieces. As it is important to get all the information you need before you make a decision, check with other specialists and supplement it with your own research as well.

CULTIVATE YOUR INTEREST

As a new collector to the field, follow your curiosity if a piece strikes you as beautiful. What catches your eye is a significant indicator of your artistic inclination, and you should take that interest forward. As art endures and taps into a larger understanding of culture, follow your gut instinct instead of treating it as a regular investment. Though there is no 100 per cent guarantee that its value will go up over time, you become personally invested in a work of art that you appreciate.

HAVE FAITH IN YOUR CHOICE

Set yourself a limit beforehand. Once the actual process of bidding has started, be confident about your pick. When others bid for your chosen piece, it will increase certainty about the item and reinforce the realisation whether you really want to own it. Go higher if taking the big step seems worth it, but don't overshoot your limit. Most importantly, remember to have fun and soak in the charged atmosphere at the auction.

4 must-try autumn sports

Kite surfing

Autumn's blustery weather is perfect for sports that rely on high wind speed, such as kite boarding. If you are keen on mastering the sport, try the certified courses being offered at Morjim Beach in Goa.

Mountain biking

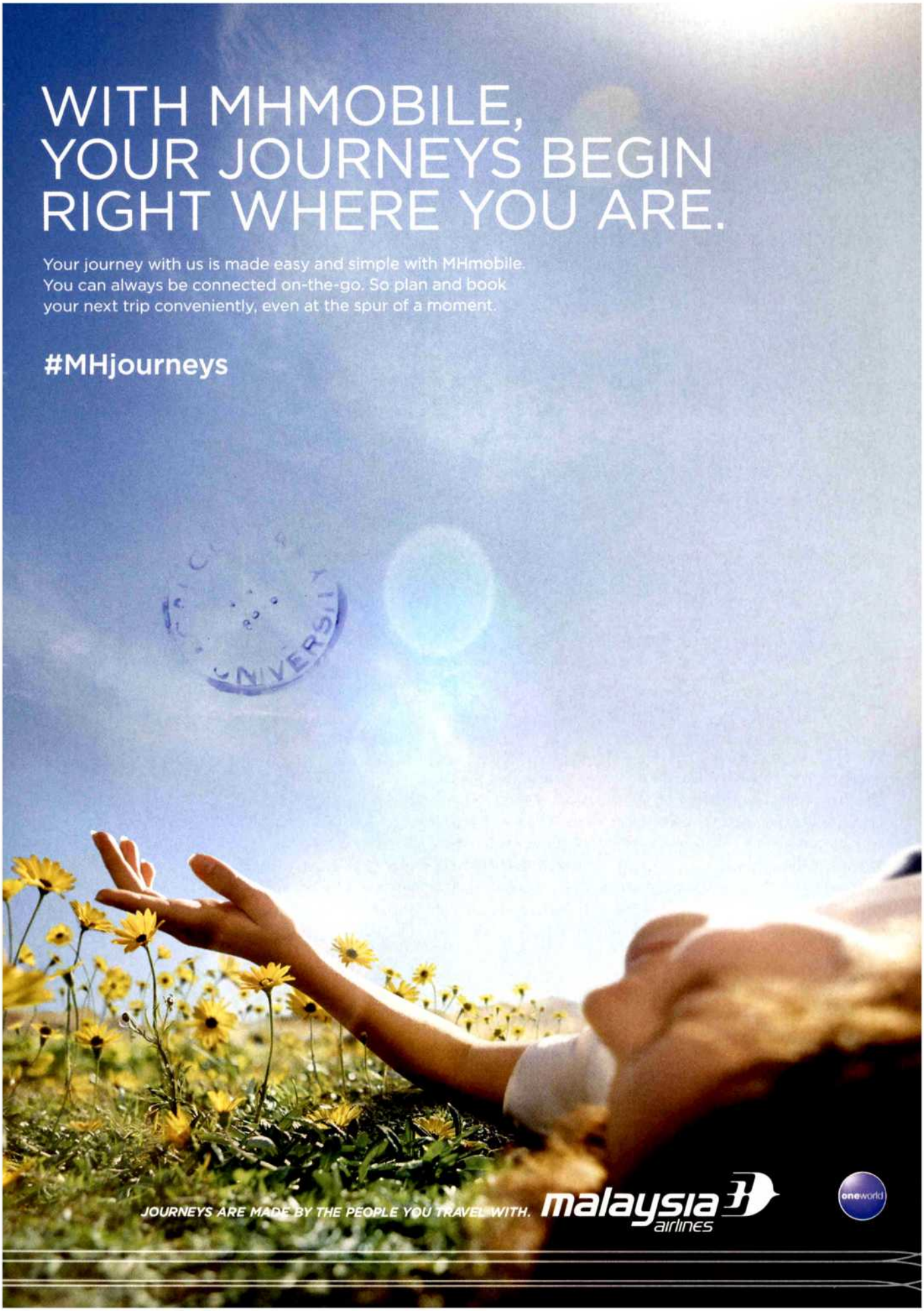
This sport lets you go off-track – literally – and explore nature's beauty at its best. Routes usually wind through high passes and give you an exhilarating experience of altitude gain.

Canoeing

Canoeing implies unadulterated action. To work those muscles, apply to a canoe marathon where kayak-type racing with sprints into the dock is followed by timed sprints across land.

Caving

Caving involves a bit of everything and is perfect for a pleasant morning. Try a bit of free hand rock climbing, plenty of crawling, squeezing through tiny crevices and, if you're lucky, swimming as well.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How to fasten a double D ring belt

Thread the belt through your pant loops until the D links are positioned where the belt buckle usually is. Pull the loose end of the belt through both D-rings.

Separate the two D-rings so there is enough space for the belt to pass between them. Loop the loose end of the belt back to the D-rings so that it folds over itself.

Pull the loose end of the belt through the D-rings, going over the closest ring and under the second ring. Pull the loose end of the belt until it feels tight on your hips.

The D-rings should be resting flat against your pants. Tuck the loose end of the belt through the closest belt loop on your pants to secure it.

Get your Tux Fix

GET THE ELEMENTS OF A TUXEDO right before a much-awaited black tie event and wear it with suave confidence.

WHY A TUXEDO?

The classic fuller tuxedo that moulds itself to your body and adds volume has been all but replaced with contemporary slim-fit two-button tuxedos, which are narrower with a flattering silhouette. With the tuxedo getting shorter and slimmer, you can experiment to accentuate your shoulders or show off the results of all those hours spent slogging at the gym. But don't fret if you haven't had time to hit the gym, the right tuxedo will invariably flatter your physique.

TYPES OF LAPELS

Notch lapel The classic option for single-breasted tuxedos, this is the safest collar you can opt for. A tuxedo with slim notch lapels is a wardrobe staple.

Peak lapel You need flair to carry off the traditional peak lapel, which essays the tailcoat's flamboyant elegance with ease. Peak lapels are decidedly more fashion-forward, and donning one of these exclusive double-breasted pieces at a wedding or a formal dinner is sure to turn heads.

Shawl lapel Characterised by a sweeping, rounded edge with no dents, this is another traditional choice that goes perfectly with modern aesthetics.

Notch Lapel

Peak Lapel

Shawl Lapel

LAPELS FOR YOUR BODY TYPE

As suit lapels are a strong player in the game of proportions, use it to the hilt to get the right look for yourself. Though notch lapels suit all body types, tweak their width to suit your frame. Slim notch lapels flatter a slimmer body type while normal notch ones are good for broader frames. Peak lapels — which add height with its finely-crafted pointed ends — are a good option if you are on the heavier side. Avoid shawl lapels if your face or body is round as these exaggerate rounded shapes.

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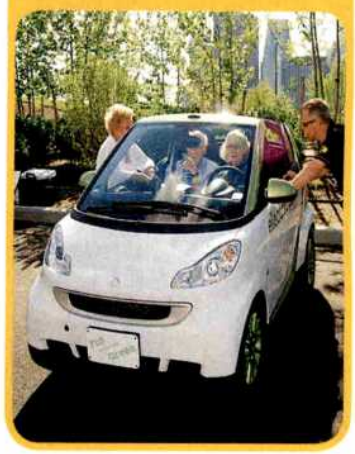
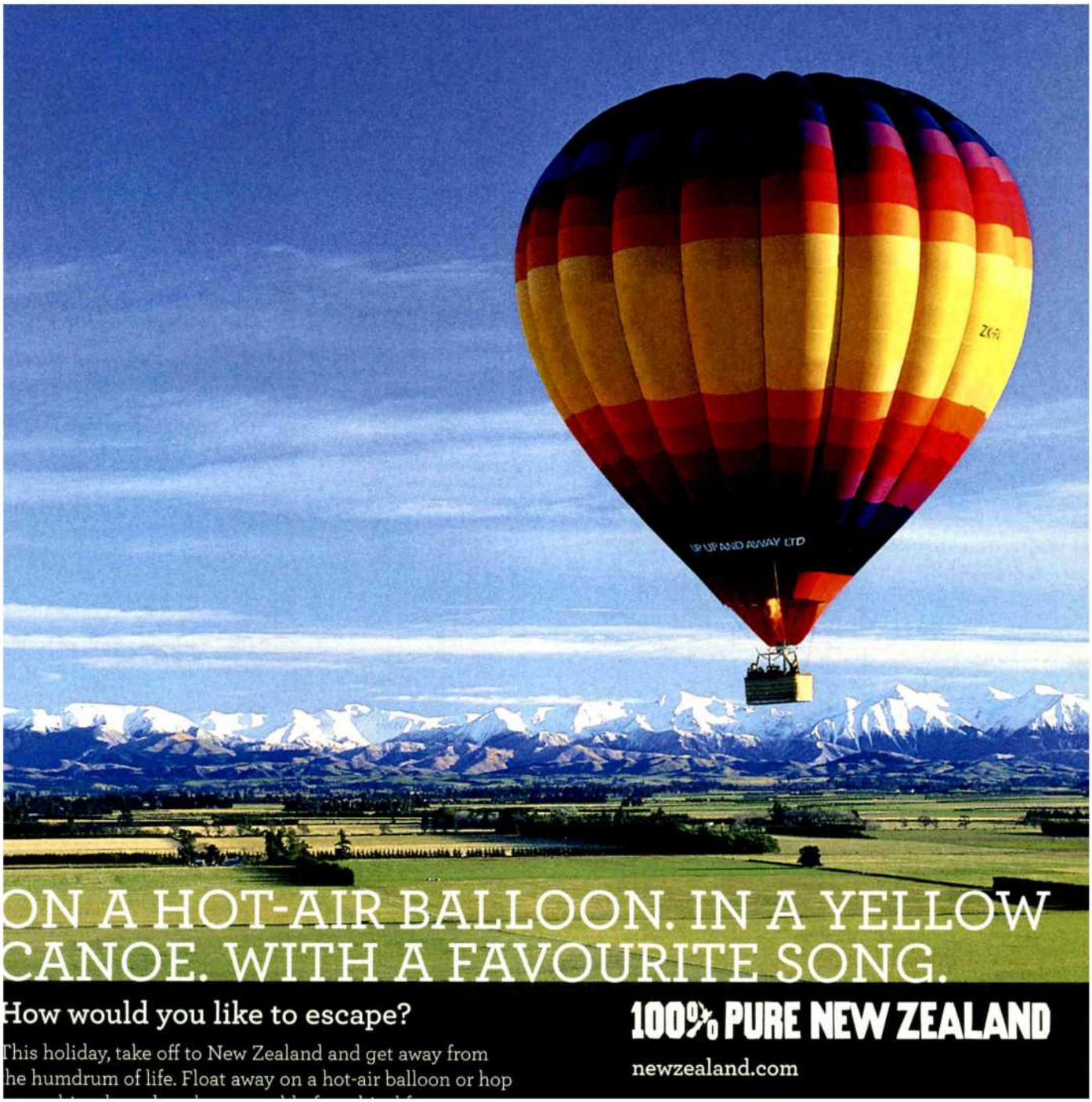
ORLANDO BLOOMS GREEN

Burn money, not fuel. Electric car promoters hope to entice a few of Orlando's 56 million annual visitors into renting Nissan Leaf cars at the airport, and recharging them at strategically positioned charging stations near tourist hotels and theme parks. According to officials spearheading the green initiative, the Drive Electric Orlando campaign is aimed at encouraging broader adoption of electric vehicles by providing visitors an extended test drive during their stay. The environment-friendly initiative will start with 15 electric cars being made available through the Rent-A-Car enterprise, and establishment of charging stations at 26 hotels across the city.



A GOOGLE-EYE VIEW OF THE A380

Want a sneak peek into the Emirates' super-luxury aircraft before splurging over $20,000 on a ticket? To showcase all the creature comforts inside its impressive Airbus A380 jumbo jets, Emirates has partnered with Google to create a street view for the plane – a first for any aircraft. A clever way to show off the extreme luxury reserved for its high-paying passengers (read onboard showers, spa, private suites and high-end entertainment systems), the facility literally walks you through the expanse of the entire aircraft – including its cockpit. So, go ahead and take a Google-eye view of the A380 at http://goo.gl/ALubjA.



ON A HOT-AIR BALLOON. IN A YELLOW CANOE. WITH A FAVOURITE SONG.

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AROUND THE GLOBE IN 21 DAYS

It took Magellan's crew nearly three years, Phileas Fogg and Passepartout did it in 80 days, and now it's your turn to go around the world – in just three weeks. Here's a luxury tour that will take you on your trip of a lifetime, courtesy Australia-based Captain's Choice. Departing from London, the tour – made entirely by chartered jet – would cost £34,850 and include hotel stays at Rio de Janeiro, Agra, Tahiti and Wolgan Valley, Australia. Feeling adventurous?

NOT SEEING IS BELIEVING

Want to disappear for a month, literally?

If you found the Cheshire Cat's disappearing act in 'Alice in Wonderland' unnerving, this one will do quite a number on you. The MirrorCube, a distinctive hotel room designed by Tham & Videgard architects in Harads (Sweden), is clad in mirrors that reflect the surroundings and camouflage it in the trees — effectively making it disappear. With

The room is covered with an infrared film, which makes it visible to birds ▲

the cube-like room rendered almost unnoticeable from certain angles, its designers were initially faced with a peculiar problem — birds kept flying into it. However, covering the walls with an infrared film, invisible to humans but highly visible to our winged friends, solved that issue. This, however, is not the room's only selling point. With a luxurious bedroom, bathroom, lounge, rooftop terrace and windows with the greenest of views, the MirrorCube promises to be the best of getaways. Accommodation for two costs upwards of 4,600 Swedish konors.

FLYING OFF TH HANDLE, SIR?

In Paris one day, and Tokyo the ot Flying can be quite stressful for business travellers who have to k making work-related trips to fore locales. A survey by American Express Global Business Travel lo at ways in which business travell handle flying-induced stress. Alm three-quarters, or 74% of the respondents, said they drink extr water while flying. Nearly half (48 said they stretch on the plane an 44% said they use the hotel gym. Despite planes increasingly provi WiFi connectivity, 61% said they l forward to disconnecting from w and either reading a good book o watching a movie (56%) while fly

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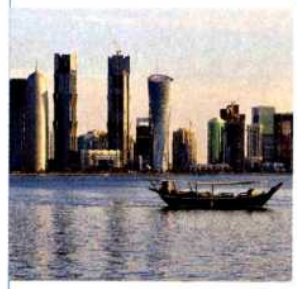
DENVER INTERNATIONAL WINE FESTIVAL, DENVER, COLORADO, USA

Hosted by the Wine Country International magazine, the five-day Denver International Wine Festival will feature more than 400 international wines from over 18 countries, besides exquisite food and special events with stars from the world of food and wine. The venue for the festival has been shifted to a larger space this

year, with Omni Interlocken Resort in Bloomsfield as the offical location. The festival promises an extravaganza of food, wine and a whole lot of fun. For further information, visit denverwinefest.com.



14-16 Nov

WORLD LUXURY EXPO, DOHA, QATAR

Leading luxury brands from every possible sphere across the world – from art and banking to health and real estate – will be present at the World Luxury Expo, which aims to bring the best from the world of luxury to an audience that's equally discerning. For further information, visit worldluxuryexpo-doha.com.

17-21 Nov

DUBAI AIRSHOW 2013, DUBAI

Produced by F&E Aerospace, the Dubai Airshow is considered one of the leading aerospace events in the Middle East. First held in 1986, the airshow is a premier place for buyers and sellers to connect and maximise their business. In 2011, the show saw the participation of 960 companies from 50 countries, and the figures may get even better now. For more info, visit dubaiairshow.aero.

22 Nov - 1 Dec

THE 43RD TOKYO MOTOR SHOW, JAPAN

Bringing automobile manufacturers from around the world under one roof, the 43rd Tokyo Motor Show promises to showcase the latest from the world of motor vehicles. For tickets and more information, visit tokyo-motorshow.com.

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Easy on the Eye

Long hours in front of the computer giving you blurred vision and a headache? Here are some tips to ensure that this does not have an adverse effect on your health

It's important to give your eyes a short break from the computer monitor every twenty minutes ▲

Keep away from the window

Extraneous light, otherwise known as glare, is the greatest source of eyestrain to computer users. If the desktop is located near a window, ensure that adjustable shades, curtains or blinds are used to dull the intensity of light. Avoid facing an un-shaded window or an alternative light source — the difference in brightness may cause stress and discomfort to the eyes.

Adjust your monitor's height

For optimum eye comfort, the centre of the computer screen should be positioned five to nine inches below your horizontal line of sight. You should be looking just over the top of the monitor in your straight-ahead gaze.

Get the right lenses

Studies show that while looking at a computer or digital screen, people spend more time concentrating and blink less frequently (up to three times less than normal). Long periods of not blinking can cause the surface of your eyes and contact lenses to dry out, leading to discomfort and loss of visual clarity. Try to get lenses that provide wearers with increased moisture all day.

Adjust your display settings

You can spare your eyes a lot of strain through proper adjustment of your monitor display settings. Ideally, the brightness of the display should be the same as that of your surroundings. If you are reading a long document, modify it in a way that stands out against the background.

Take regular breaks

Your eyes are not meant for viewing anything at a close distance for hours without a break. Take a 20-second break every 20 minutes, and focus your eyes on points at least 20 feet from your computer. Keep your eyes moving while looking at objects at various distances.

Keep Your Hair On

While genes have a big role to play in hair loss, here are some tips to keep your scalp healthy in the long run.

Do's

Say No to Dandruff

Many men, especially those with oily hair, get plagued with dandruff – increasing the chances of hairfall. Use shampoos that contain aloe vera to keep dandruff away; it can have long-term repercussions on your scalp.

Eat Right

Have food with lots of vitamin A (lettuce, carrots), which encourages production of sebum in the scalp, and vitamin E (apricots, peanuts), which enhances blood circulation in the scalp. Protein-rich foods also help.

Oil Massage

People who have been experiencing hair loss on a regular basis must massage their scalp with essential oils that help your hair follicles remain active. Adding lavender to almond or sesame oil can further help.

Don'ts

Comb Wet Hair

Avoid brushing your hair or combing when you are just out of the shower because hair is in its weakest state when it's wet. If you simply must style wet hair, use a wide-toothed comb that ensures minimal breakage.

Smoke Away

Smoking reduces the amount of blood that flows to the scalp, causing a slump in hair growth. That's not all – there are over 4,000 chemicals in cigarettes that affect the way your hair looks and smells, and ultimately comes off.

Stress Yourself

Numerous studies have found medical evidence linking stress to hair loss. De-stress yourself through yoga and meditation and, believe us, your hair won't be the only part of your body thanking you for it.

Garmin Forerunner 610

JUST ANOTHER GPS-CAPABLE WATCH? BUT NO, THE Garmin Forerunner 610 does more than just talk to satellites. Its key features for runners include Virtual Racer and Virtual Partner, which enable you to race your previous bests, another user's pace, or simply maintain a static, pre-determined speed. Completely waterproof, the Garmin Forerunner 610 uses a one-inch touchscreen, and pairs with a Mac or Windows PC using fitness gadget-specific ANT+ wireless tech.

Price: ₹24,940

DO THE LOCO-MOTION

From Men's Health

You don't necessarily have to pound on monster exercise machines to lose that extra flab. Here are a few simple exercises that could work just as well.

▲ PRISONER SQUAT
Stand with your hands behind your head. Sit back at the hips and squat down. Squeeze your glutes and push back up.

▲ WAITER'S BOW
Pinch the skin of your lower back and bow forward as far as you can while squeezing an inch of skin. Repeat.

▲ LUNGE
Take a large step forward with one leg. When your front thigh is parallel to the floor, hold for two beats and return. Repeat with your other leg.

▲ LEG SWING
Swing your leg in front of you, then bend your knee and swing it behind you so your heel moves toward your butt. Do six reps with each leg.

Time & Tide

An old adage says that time and tide wait for none. SANHITA SINHA CHOWDHHURY discovers a timepiece from Panerai which understands this.

SUCCESS IN A RACE IS TYPICALLY dependent on the skills of the sportsmen and the way they manage time. But when it isn't a solo performance, and the allies of the players are not just their team members but the unpredictable forces of nature, the utilisation of time definitely cannot be left to the ordinary ticking of the clock.

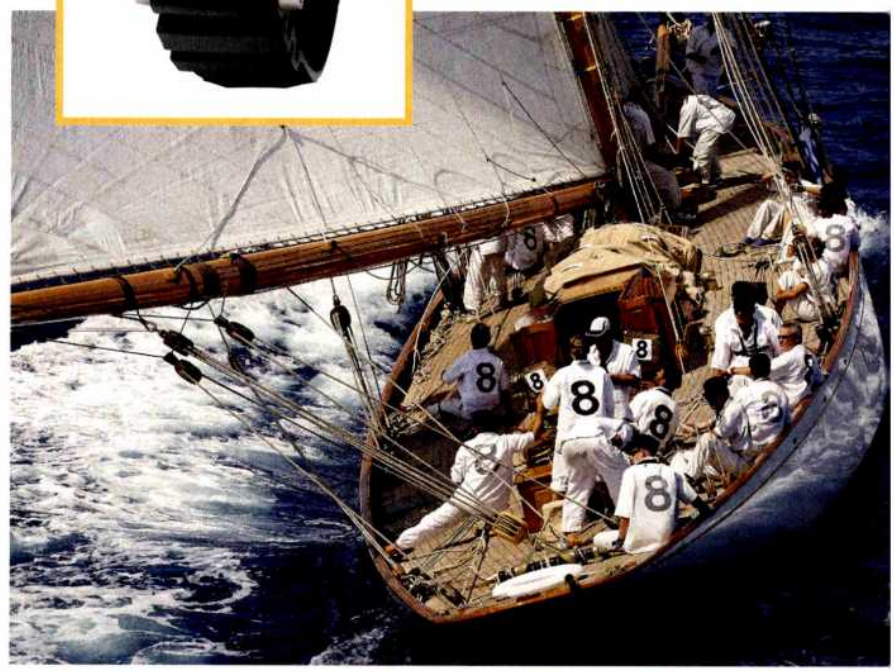
A classic yacht race begins when all the vessels have been lined up at the start line between the buoys. But since these boats are guided by the winds and water, they are in constant motion – not sitting still at any point. Unlike other kinds of races, the challenge for the crew members aboard the yacht is to cross the start line only after the signal has been given; crossing the line early would lead to penalty, and maintaining a safe distance from it would put them at a disadvantage once the race begins. Yacht races, it's often believed, are won or lost at the start line.

With its years of expertise in nautical horology, Officine Panerai has come up with a watch that measures this critical interval between the sounds of the warning gun and the start gun. The Luminor 1950 Regatta 3 Days Chrono Flyback Titanio is fitted with the Regatta countdown function, specifically created for yacht racing starts. An orange push-button at four o'clock moves the central orange chronograph minute hand back one minute at a time, until it is at the correct position in relation to the length of the countdown.

The chronograph is started after the warning signal is given, by pushing the chronograph stop/start button at 10 o'clock. The relative hands indicate the time left for the start, and then, when the countdown has finished, the time elapsed since the start of the race. The reset button, located at eight o'clock, ends the time measurement — returning all the chronograph hands to zero.

Alternatively, if the watch is operated while its hands are moving, it activates the return-to-zero (flyback) function, thus enabling a new time interval to be measured immediately without operating the stop and reset buttons.

The Panerai Classic Yachts Challenge 2013 - Le Vele d'Epoca a Napoli was held in Naples, Italy. The writer had travelled for the same.



The challenge for the yacht crew is to cross the start line only after the signal is given ▲

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Flight Fashionista

With good looks gaining more importance than ever, you can no longer be excused for airport style casualties — even if you are a frequent flier. Here's everything you'll ever need to make a dashing impression when on the go!

TEXT BY SAURAV BHANOT

In the corporate world, hectic times call for long-haul flights. And even during those not-so-hectic times, you may find yourself hopping from one airport to another. On days that you're busy thinking about your next meeting, conference or presentation while in transit, considerations about the way you're dressed tend to take a backseat. We all want to make sure we're comfortable when sitting through a long-haul flight, and looking good — let's admit it — isn't a priority. But, in supremely fashion-conscious times such as ours, to err is no longer human; it is just so last season!

Comfort vs Style

The eternal fashion debate might not have a clear solution but it certainly has a happy midway. Being comfortable in what you wear is of utmost importance when you're trapped inside a plane for 8 hours at a stretch or even more. Designer Varun Bahl feels the tide has turned in recent times. He says, "There was a time when everyone would overdress to catch a flight, yet now no one bothers to even look decent. While you certainly should be comfortable on a flight, it is no reason for you to look shoddy." With many stylish yet comfortable clothing options available just for travel, being caught at an airport wearing your track pants and sweats is no longer acceptable You don't have to dress up, just dress smart.

The trick as per ace designer Ravi Bajaj is, "Go for clothes that are wrinkle resistant, breathable and soft." Your best bet would be cotton and linen that are easy to wear for long durations. And while linen does get difficult to maintain after some time, there are no such issues with cotton. If you happen to be a denim person then make sure you opt for softer denim fabric during travel.

What, Why and Wear

Start by getting the basics right and invest in a good pair of chinos. These are not as formal and uncomfortable as trousers but are high on the trend wagon. Besides, they allow you to stretch your legs effortlessly so you don't feel cramped on a long flight. Chinos are also warmer than regular trousers and the sudden drop in temperature on a flight won't make you uncomfortable. Brands such as Zara, Calvin Klein, Tom Ford and Paul and Shark offer great options for chinos and you can choose a subtle or bold shade depending on your style. If chinos are not your thing, denims are a good option. Just make sure they aren't too clingy on the waist or the legs as sitting in tight clothing on a long flight can prove very uncomfortable. If you want something even more comfortable, then linen pants are a great style option.

Depending on the weather (both where you take off from and where you land) get yourself a well fitted jacket but something that does not scream 'office wear'. It is a tried-and-tested formula and never goes out of style. "Pair your jacket or blazer with chinos or linen pants and you can even turn it into a smart semi-formal look good enough if you are meeting some workmate or heading for a conference immediately post your flight. Just remember to hang your jacket separately during the flight," adds Varun Bahl. For those wondering if a jacket is only suitable during winters, say hello to fashionable summer jackets that use lighter fabric and are uber stylish. Get yourself one in a neutral shade that goes with most colours and if the regular cotton jacket sounds too staid, opt for one in leather or denim. Remember though, leather or denim jackets are paired best with easy jeans and could look tacky if not accessorised with the right pants.

▲ This one is a classic casual look that'll never go out of style!

Opt for a casual shirt or t-shirt, depending on where you need to head to when you land. Just make sure that the shirt isn't too loud or screams boring work wear as neither is a good travel option. As for your t-shirt, make sure to get a plain one as these look really smart when worn under a well-fitted jacket. Also keep a check on the length of your t-shirt and make sure it isn't too long as that can kill your look with one stroke; also remember to never ever tuck your t-shirt in. It is truly bad form!

Designers also suggest you opt for plain collarless t-shirts that are available in myriad colours and team well with a jacket and chinos/jeans. You could also opt for a polo t-shirt.

▲ A formal jacket with jeans or formal trousers, and a shirt teamed with a smart jacket are good semi-formal looks that are both comfortable and trendy.

As far as footwear goes, you never wear black formal shoes with your jeans or chinos. After all, moccasins and loafers exist for a reason, right? "Flat shoes such as moccasins and loafers are made of breathable fabric and are easy to slip on and off making them ideal for travel" feels designer Ashish N Soni. If open footwear is your thing then sandals are a great option but not the kinds you wore as a kid. Go for leather ones which are classic instead. Slippers that don't look like you wore them straight from the restroom are okay as well.

Considering you're going to be 'locked' in an airplane for quite a while, heavily accessorising your look doesn't really make sense. However, there are a few things you must carry and one of them is the man-bag. For those who came in late, a man bag has been the coolest accessory in town since last season; everyone from Ryan Gosling to David Beckham abroad and Ranbir Kapoor and Arjun Rampal closer home has been flaunting it in style. It could be a messenger bag, a tote or a duffel and carryall bag. Get one in either black leather, tan or opt for a funky, bright shade and notice heads turning the next time you're in an airport. Some great options are available at brands such as Kenneth Cole, Calvin Klein Jeans and Louis Vuitton. A man-bag is spacious enough to fit in all your basics including grooming items, wallet, phone charger, iPod etc and makes for a great replacement to the boring handbag. Another must-have accessory is a decent pair of sunglasses. You can also add on a scarf to your look if travelling in winter, but make sure it is a patterned one and you are knotting it the right way. A hat for a beach-side location and a beret if headed to a cold place is also a great idea.

Work in Style

There are a number of occasions when you have to head directly to a meeting/conference from the airport and you are not keen on changing your outfit at the end of the flight. In such times, board the

▼ A smart pair of chinos, stylish man bag and chic moccasins make for a uber-stylish combo.

flight in formals that work.

While you can't do anything about your trousers and shirt, you can easily carry a spare jacket and keep your formal one neatly hung on the aircraft in mint condition. "If you can avoid wearing a suit for the meeting then a cashmere sweater that is easy to manage over a shirt or next to the skin with your denims is a good option too," adds designer Ravi Bajaj. Keep aside any other piece of clothing that you can to make sure it is as fresh as possible once you land. And of course, stick to wrinkle-free variants.

Clothes aside, it's important to step off the aircraft looking fresh and professional, even if you haven't had much shut eye. A good grooming kit should include a face wash, moisturiser, electronic trimmer, hair gel and mouthwash. While chances are that you will be flying business or first class on corporate travel and a grooming kit is given to you on board, stick to your own products. About an hour before the flight lands, head to the washroom. Wash your face with a good facewash, get rid of any evening stubble, rinse your mouth to get fresh breath and style your hair appropriately if it looks like you have been sleeping on it!

You have to take care of yourself and your body through the duration of the flight to make sure you exit looking as fresh as possible. Cotton-mouth, bloodshot eyes, chapped lips and dry skin are some of the most common after-effects of a long-haul flight. To deal with these, keep yourself well hydrated by drinking water as regularly as possible and avoiding the intake of alcohol, tea and coffee or keeping it to bare minimum. Ideally, drink 30 ml of water every hour if you can. One of the most common problems of long flights is jet lag caused by crossing time zones. Jet lag can leave you tired, bad tempered, sleep deprived and constipated. To avoid all of these, try and get some quality sleep though that can be tough if you are not a keen traveller. Try and eat a banana before sleeping as it contains the amino acid tryptophan that aids restful sleep.

No one expects you to roll into a meeting in a remote corner of the world looking like you stepped off the runway but given the mad pace of corporate life, every second counts and it helps to be prepared. It also doesn't hurt to look decent even if you are not rushing off for a meeting right off the flight; after all you never know who you will bump into at an airport lounge or on the flight and it would not bode well if you came off looking tacky or shabby. You are representing your company or yourself after all!

LAY OVER AND ENJOY

Bracing yourself for a long layover at an airport in the middle of nowhere? Don't worry, you may be in for a whale of a time

TEXT BY JIMMY J

GETTING THERE IS HALF THE FUN.
Or, is it? When officials of the Cunard Line shipping company famously used this catchline in the 1950s to herd tourists into its luxury cruises, they certainly weren't referring to airport layovers. According to most passengers, having to wait for a connecting flight at a terminal in the middle of nowhere land is akin to being stuck in limbo – far from the starting point and not a lot closer to the destination – with nothing better to do but twiddle your thumbs. The creaky chairs and packaged sandwich lunches don't help either, and for some reason, you just can't get the theme song of *The Terminal* out of your head.

But things are changing, for the better. Airports across the world have realised the importance of making visitors feel at home, especially the ones who stay for stretched periods of time in their visitor lounges. Besides enhancing culinary options with the establishment of gourmet restaurants and upscale watering holes, they have introduced entertainment-cum-comfort facilities that range from 4-D movie theatres to bowling alleys and golf courses. For travellers inclined to high art, there are museums and exhibitions that promise to make them wish that the weather delays their flights for just a little bit longer. A look at five of the best airports across the world for a layover.

Dubai International Airport

If you believe that shopping is the best cure for ennui, this airport located in the capital city of the United Arab Emirates should be the apt choice for a layover. Stretch your legs after a non-stop 24-hour flight with a brisk walk through the world's largest airport duty-free Mecca, with over 58,000 feet of shelf space devoted to perfumes, liquor, tobacco, watches and luxury articles. Once you have indulged your baser instincts at the shopping arena, treat your tired bones to some well-deserved rest at the luxurious Dubai International Hotel, featuring 88 beautiful suites and a world-class restaurant with panoramic views. The fun doesn't end there. For fitness enthusiasts, the fully equipped G-Force Health Club at the Sheikh Rashid Terminal features resistance and cardio-vascular machines, a swimming pool, shower facilities, saunas, jacuzzis, steam rooms and massage rooms. Qualified instructors and masseurs work 24/7 to help you make the most of your visit. But, just then, you get a call from your office - asking you to urgently set up a virtual conference with five clients across three continents. Make your way to the in-house Connect Business Centre, which offers a wide range of business support services round the clock. In addition to complete secretarial services and computer workstations, the centre has a number of conference rooms - the largest of which features a rear-projection video display system.

AIRPORT FACTS

Country United Arab Emirates

Main Airlines Emirates, KLM, Air India, British Airways

Look out for

1. World's largest duty-free Mecca
2. Fitness club for health enthusiasts
3. Connect Business Centre for corporate travellers

Vancouver International Airport

There are very few airports that cater to every whim of a person, and if you happen to be passing through Vancouver – rest assured, you are at one of them. If you are travelling with your wife, she may want to visit the pre-security dental office for botox treatment. If food comes to mind, there is no shortage of establishments – from bars, fast food joints and sit-down restaurants like White Spot and Milestone's - that cater to the hungriest of tummies. And then, for others, a layover at Vancouver is like staying overnight at the biggest of shopping malls. Apart from 13 different duty-free establishments at the airport, visitors can splurge their money on everything from electronics to fashion and jewellery at various outlets located across an expansive commercial zone. Bookworms may browse through the numerous newsstands and bookstores that dot the airport – they have enough to fill up an entire library. However, all this plays second fiddle to the Vancouver airport's main attraction – an 114,000-litre aquarium located in the main atrium of the international terminal. While this piece of display features as many as 850 species of Pacific-specific marine life, such as fish-eating anemones and mottled sea stars, a smaller cylindrical tank upstairs holds more than 100 graceful moon jellyfish. For the art enthusiast, there are paintings and art installations displayed across the domestic and international wings. Many of the pieces showcase First Nations art from the Northwest Coast, such as a traditional longhouse doorway and 12-metre carved canoe.

AIRPORT FACTS

Country Canada

Main Airlines Air Canada, Finnair, British Airways

Look out for

1. Expansive duty-free shopping centre
2. Exotic marine aquarium
3. Paintings and art installations

Hong Kong Airport

Now, this is one place Tiger Woods would love to be stuck in. Nestled in Terminal 2 of the Hong Kong Airport is the Sky City Nine Eagles Golf Course, complete with a nine-hole expanse, an artificial lake and floodlights that facilitate night play. But if virtual gameplay is more your thing, the Hong Kong Airport has an answer for that too. Welcome to the Play Station Gateway, a virtual entertainment arena that offers the latest in PS3 and PSP games. Or, would you care for a movie instead? Head to the 4-D Extreme Cinema Hall at the airport, which features second-run releases like Saw 3-D and The Nutty Professor with multi-sensory special effects. Just remember – you might want to hold your breath every time Eddie Murphy indulges in some on-screen flatulence.

AIRPORT FACTS

Country China

Main Airlines Cathay Pacific, Lufthansa, British Airways

Look out for

1. Airport golf course
2. Virtual gaming arena
3. 4-D Extreme Cinema Hall

Changi Airport

Getting bored at Changi would take nothing short of superhuman abilities. Rated no. 2 in the Skytrax list of best airports, it has something for everybody – from a free X-Box and PlayStation game centre to one of the most interesting botanical gardens you may have the good fortune to come across. You could start your Changi experience by checking into the Crowne Plaza Hotel, voted as one of the world's top 10 airport hotels. Once inside, you find yourself enveloped by a tropical environment – complete with courtyard gardens, a landscaped pool area and peaceful garden views from the lobby lounge. Next, pick up the keys to your accommodation from the counter, and let the bellboy escort you into a comfortable bedroom with state-of-the-art amenities. While you are at it, pamper yourself with a wide range of spa and massage treatments as well as a fine selection of bars and restaurants. But wait! Maybe your flight is just a few hours away, and you would rather go on a quick tour of Singapore instead of wasting your time lounging around in a hotel room. Hop into an airport bus for a free two-hour ride through the city – immersing yourself into a harmonious blend of culture, cuisine, arts and architecture. A joint venture between Changi Airport and Singapore Airlines, the tour covers most of important landmarks of the city, including the Singapore Flyer, Gardens by the Bay, Marina Bay Sands and The Esplanade, and brings you back well ahead of the departure time for your next flight.

AIRPORT FACTS

Country Singapore

Main Airlines Singapore Airlines, Malaysia Airlines, Virgin Australia

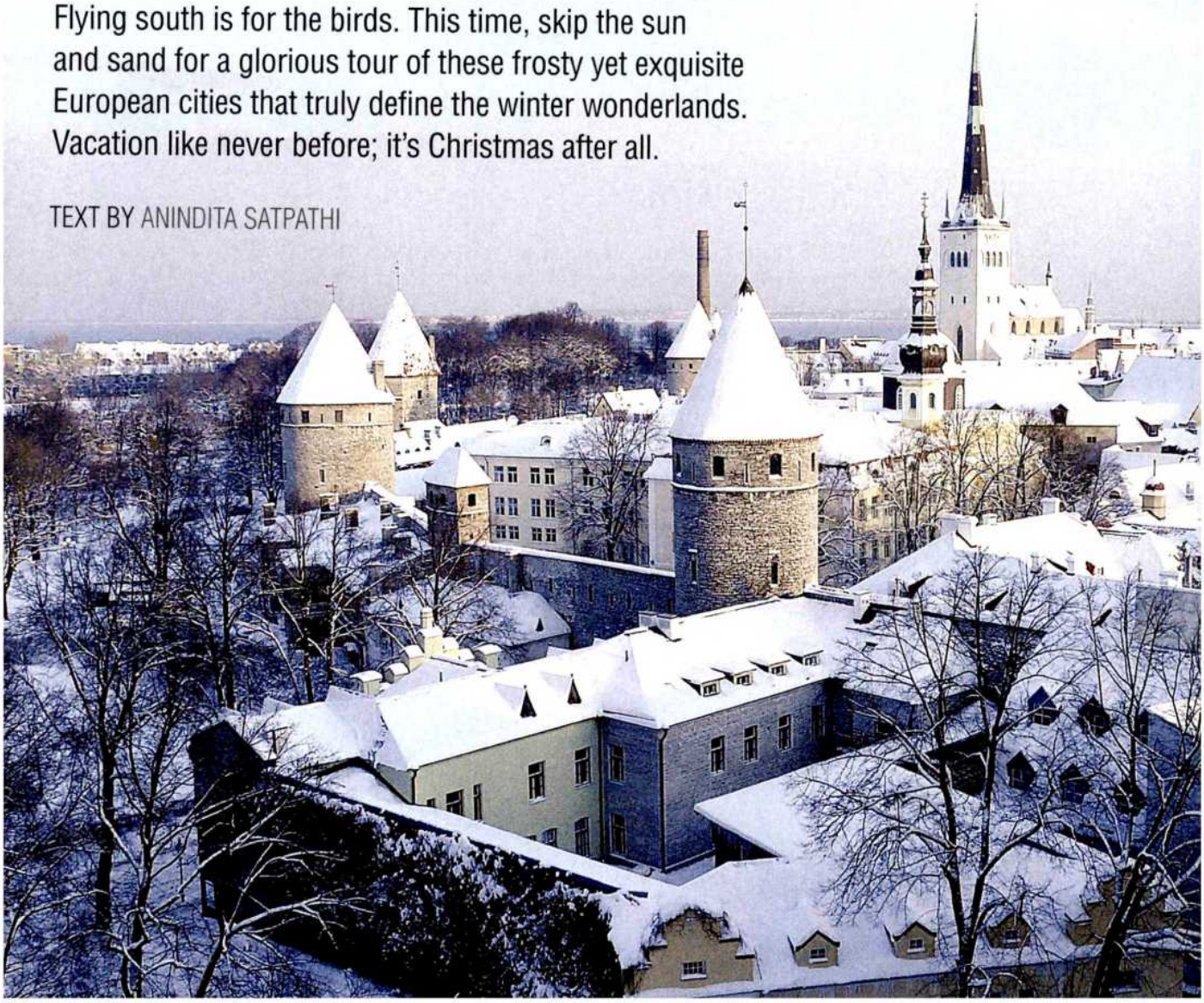
Look out for

1. Free tour of island city-state
2. Balinese-themed rooftop pool
3. Live Butterfly Garden

THIS WINTER, MAKE IT WHITE

Flying south is for the birds. This time, skip the sun and sand for a glorious tour of these frosty yet exquisite European cities that truly define the winter wonderlands. Vacation like never before; it's Christmas after all.

TEXT BY ANINDITA SATPATHI



TO REVEL IN THE MOST SUBLIME OF seasons at its untarnished best, set your sights on the big chill in Europe this Christmas. Sounds crazy? There's nothing quite like long walks with your breath frosting over; having hot chocolate and churros at cosy cafes; basking in the spirit of a European Christmas. As the year draws to a close, the unbridled manifestation of the festive spirit is just one of the many factors that make these tried and tested destinations conducive to a winter trip. Warmly embrace winter's bitter beauty and grab every opportunity to mingle with the locals, feel the vibe of the place and while away your time at museums and castles in relative solitude.

As a tourist in winter, you are far more likely to receive kindly suggestions on food and lodging and get invited to partake in traditional Christmas rituals. Instead of being just another drop in a sea of clamouring tourists, embrace your surroundings and become one with the indigenous population for a day or two.

However, with temperatures hovering way below 0° Celsius, come armed with enough parkas and ear muffs to ensure that your trip is a breezy jamboree, and not an icy misadventure. The hip flask is also recommended.

ROMANCE, SERVED CHILLED

(Venice, Italy)

In Venice, time trickles down to a fine stream till it evaporates and settles into foggy wreaths that mournfully envelop its canals – virtually suspending you in time. The otherwise bustling city, famed for its gondoliers and passionate rendering of springtime romance, gets shrouded in mist during winter – when land and water seem to merge.

Bathed in the muted grey morning light, the city opens itself up to the chill and revels in its frosty solitude – a luxury that allows you to take a leisurely gondola ride back to your hotel without jostling for space on the waterways as is the case in summer. Open your windows to a pale grey morning to be confronted with the ethereally beautiful sight of acqua alta – a winter phenomenon where the high tide rolls into town and submerges the low-lying areas of the city.

Here, you may explore the tranquility of the lesser-known churches; only, you must not hesitate to lose yourself in the labyrinth of bylanes and toss back a few un'ombras (the measure of wine in Italy). Venice is famed for its sea food, especially cicchetti – customised bar snacks – frothy salt cod, tiny, marinated octopus and fried sardines.

Head to St Mark's Square after dark – where café orchestras duel for your attention – and lose yourself in the music, or just settle for one of the many Vivaldi concerts held in churches. Spend long, luxuriant afternoons visiting house-museums and marvel at the idiosyncratic yet extensive acquisitions of lone collectors.

Lose yourself in this quaint winterland and succumb to the lull of lapping water that speaks to your soul when the hordes are at bay.

To Stay: Hotel Palazzo Stern (starting from €200)

Eateries: Sample La Caravella's full-bodied dishes – sliced beef entrecote and thick pasta with a duck ragout – are a treat for the taste buds. Café Florian, which has the distinction of being Italy's oldest café, is perfect for a lazy afternoon.

ARTY PARTY
(Vienna, Austria)

Every winter, the cosmopolitan Viennese culture scene brims, overflows and spills onto the streets, before wafting through the air in a heady twirl. It's with opulence that this city – which lives and breathes art – heralds Christmas and the gamut of cultural events that culminate in the annual Viennese ball season.

Few cities bear testimony to the spirit of camaraderie, as seen on New Year's Eve in Vienna. A mile-long trail kicks off with fireworks from the City Hall and stops at DJ stands and kiosks that fuel the party with drinks.

Head to a 400-m slope illuminated by huge floodlights in Wienerwald woods to ski by night. Once you have had your fill of the frost, treat your stiff bones to a heart-warming cocktail of apple strudel, rich chocolate Sachertorte and live piano music at the Café Sacher.

Opera, waltz and jazz hold sway in Vienna's culture circles, but there is also a gracious incorporation of ballet and rock in numerous concert performances lined up from November to December. You can be forgiven for thinking that the Vienna Ice Dream is magical; an ice rink by day, it turns into a pulsating discotheque after dark.

Brush up your dancing skills before the lavish ball season starts in January and keep a tuxedo handy for an exquisite rendition of the Blue Danube, composed by Johann Strauss II, at Hofburg Palace.

On the first morning of the New Year, shake off that hangover by participating in the Loony Dook, a tradition where hundreds plunge into the icy waters of the river Forth.

To Stay: The Ring Hotel (starting from €230)

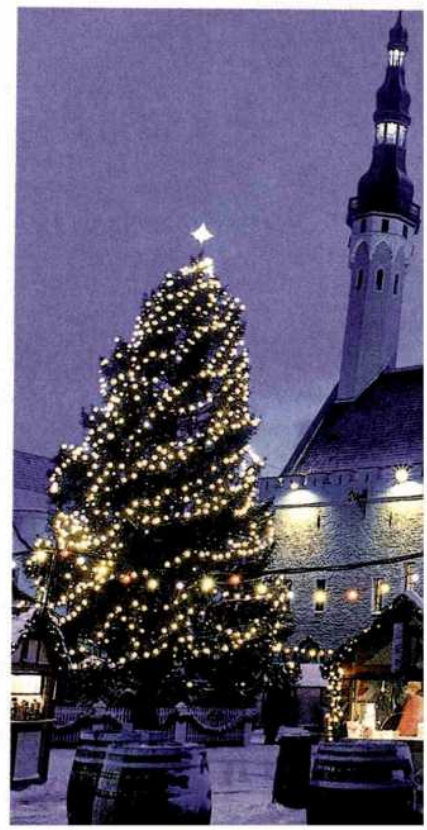
Eateries: Sample Café Gerstner's delightful art brunch and, at Café Halle, try out the braised fillet of shark and roasted lamb made in true Greek style.

MEDIEVAL HAUNT
(Tallinn, Estonia)

In Tallinn's medieval old town, which could convincingly pass off as the culmination of a time-travel experiment gone surprisingly right, running into a posse of 14th century Vikings is not a very remote possibility. But, be warned, you are more likely to find that the 'Norsemen' are actually a couple of costumed Britishers with a highly evolved sense of humour.

Times have changed, but the medieval feel continues to linger. Retaining its haunting Gothic spires, warm red gabled roofs and cobbled streets from hundreds of years ago, Tallinn oozes authentic old-world charm.

The opulent grounds of Peter the Great Kadriorg's palace surrounded by snow-laced oak and horse chestnut woodlands makes the perfect setting for the Tallinn Light Festival, which it hosted a few years ago. This



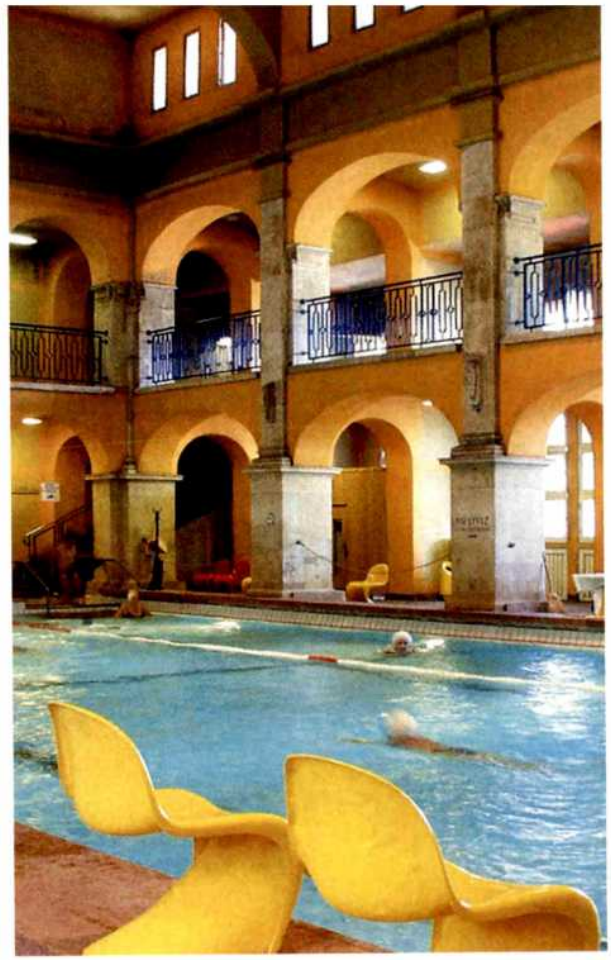
heartwarming community-contact festival reinvents street corners as cultural spots with innovative street lighting, and combats dreary winter nights by drawing on deep, pagan roots to juxtapose warmth with cold.

Now, the rosy-cheeked inhabitants of the town may look at you with shock when you tell them that you want to see Tallinn at its enchanting best (read, winter), but it beats being surrounded by hordes of tourists incessantly documenting every nook and cranny of the ornate ramparts and cornices. And, why not? The candle-lit cellar pubs here heartily welcome every frostbitten traveller, and you don't need an excuse to duck into an art-deco patisserie to warm your hands on a steaming cup of spiced hot chocolate.

The long nights are almost a blessing – they prolong the cellar pub parties where Hõõgvein (hot, literally glowing wine) keeps you warm and your taste buds tingling, with sinful blood pudding, succulent wild boar and dainty blinis.

To Stay: The Three Sisters (starting from €400)

Eateries:
Sample the hot chocolate at Café Chocolaterie de Pierre - a spicy mix of melted chocolate, cream, rum and chili - is arguably the best in town. Kompressor specialises in comfort food such as pannkoogid (pancakes) of the savoury and sweet kind.



To Stay:
Kempinski Hotel Corvinus (starting from €150)

Eateries:
Sample the fierce, paprika-spiked goulash soup and strudel in Karpatia. At Gerbeaud confectionary, try out the homemade strawberry cheese-milles feuilles.

HEARTWARMING
(Budapest, Hungary)

Budapest – stretched at the seams from the sheer magnitude of cultural soirees, parties, jazz and dance performances and boat dinners – keeps its nerves below breaking point with the calming spray of its natural thermal waters; one of the key reasons to visit in winter when the outside temperature is below freezing point.

The resplendent buildings, a legacy of the Ottoman rule, are sprawling structures that house steam rooms and the main bathing area, comprising stained glass atriums and outdoor swimming pools where you can play chess in the midst of a comforting spray of steamy water.

The 500-year-old Rudas Thermal Baths, dappled with light streaming through an exquisite stained glass-domed ceiling, turns uber-cool by night – playing host to the occasional sparty, a spa-cum-party that would beat any regular beach house bash.

After you've sampled this aspect of Budapest's charm, head to Europe's largest skating rink in the sprawling park – Városliget – and behold hundreds indulging in an activity that has endured since the 19th century. Nip into a trendy coffeehouse on the Pest's swankiest boulevard, but keep some time aside for the 'ruin pubs' – abandoned building lots renovated into exotic thrift shops that exude a casual hipster vibe. Sample the café culture in Budapest with hot mulled wine and tower cake.

The annual Christmas market may be a crowd-puller, but don't dismiss it as just another frenzied holidayer's souvenir grab spot. Sitting pretty in Vörösmarty Square from November-end to Christmas, this market features delicate, handcrafted folk art items that are believed to be the best in Europe. Go ahead, pick up a few for your family and friends!

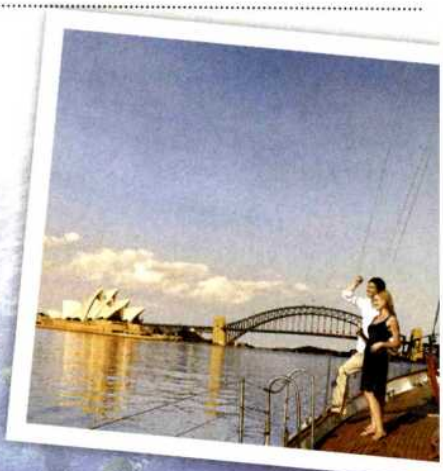
KOREAN AIR
"EXCELLENCE IN FLIGHT"

Korean Air, with a fleet of 155 aircraft, is one of the world's top 20 airlines, and operates more than 400 flights per day to 126 cities in 45 countries. It is a founding member of the SkyTeam alliance, which together with its 19 members, offers its 552 million annual passengers a worldwide system of more than 15,000 daily flights covering 993 destinations in 187 countries.

In 2012, Business Traveler named Korean Air the best Asian airline for the sixth consecutive year while the China Travel Media Alliance named Korean Air "the Best Airline of the Year." Korean Air became the first airline to receive the Excellence in Service award at the World Travel Awards. In 2011, Global Traveler awarded the airline with best airline in northern Asia and best airport staff/gate agents. The carrier has repeatedly won the Global Travel Catering Distinction award by Pax International magazine while World Traveler magazine rated it as having the world's best inflight service. Travel & Leisure magazine readers have consistently named it as one of the world's top 10 international carriers.

More on Korean Air's programs, routes, frequencies and partners is available at www.koreanair.com

There's Nothing like
Australia



As a holiday destination, Australia has something for every kind of traveller, be it a romantic getaway or an adrenaline filled adventure experiences, a family vacation with kids or even an indulgent luxurious holiday.

See Sydney from a different perspective by climbing to the top of the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Watch nature's drama unfold around every turn of the Great Ocean Road. Indulge in snorkeling, scuba diving or take in enchanting views at the Great Barrier Reef. Kangaroo Island is a haven for nature & food lovers.

From private island drops at Qualia to dining under the stars at Longitude 131 to rejuvenating spa treatments at Saffire Freycinet to a special gastronomic journey at the Southern Ocean Lodge to bush walking at Wolgan Valley there are diverse options of the Luxury Lodges of Australia for travellers to select from and indulge in.

THE ARTFUL LODGER

From a living art gallery inside an old warehouse to a sumptuous 19th century neoclassical palace hotel, take a look at some of the most artsy accommodations across the world.

TEXT BY ANUSHREE BASU-BHALLA

HAVE YOU EVER WALKED INTO A hotel only to stop and marvel at the aesthetic spectacle that lies before you? A hotel stay is very much a journey in itself, one that stays with you beyond your days of travel to the destination.

The current, widely diluted hospitality industry landscape dictates hoteliers to create unique ways to engage with travellers. If you find a typically staid but slick luxury hotel drawing design cues from neo-classical decorative arts after a renovation bout, it simply reflects a larger hospitality trend worldwide. This is ushering in a design renaissance of sorts in an otherwise traditionally homogeneous environment. While faultless service, round-the-clock restaurants, modern amenities, and comfortable décor are the hallmarks of creating a successful hospitality venture, art has become a hotel design staple in recent years, creating an dynamic environment for discerning guests.

Here are some unique hotels that have lent an artful approach to hospitality.

The New York Moment

Gramercy Park Hotel, New York

Effortlessly bohemian and unapologetically hedonistic, the Gramercy Park Hotel has been a historic hotspot for New Yorkers for the last 80 years. The celebrity roll call includes names like Bob Marley, Bob Dylan, Margaret Hamilton, David Mamet, Matt Dillon, David Bowie, The Clash, and Madonna. But aside from this glamorous list of jetsetters who temporarily made it their home, the hotel is most famous for its impressive art collection that's partly curated by artist and award-winning film director Julian Schnabel. The hotel decor is a plush juxtaposition of brickwork and untreated wood beams made of Douglas fir and walnut, where Baroque Louis XV chairs sit below a changing collection of hand-selected masterpieces of modern art by the likes of Maarten Baas, Andy Warhol, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Cy Twombly, Damien Hirst and Richard Prince.

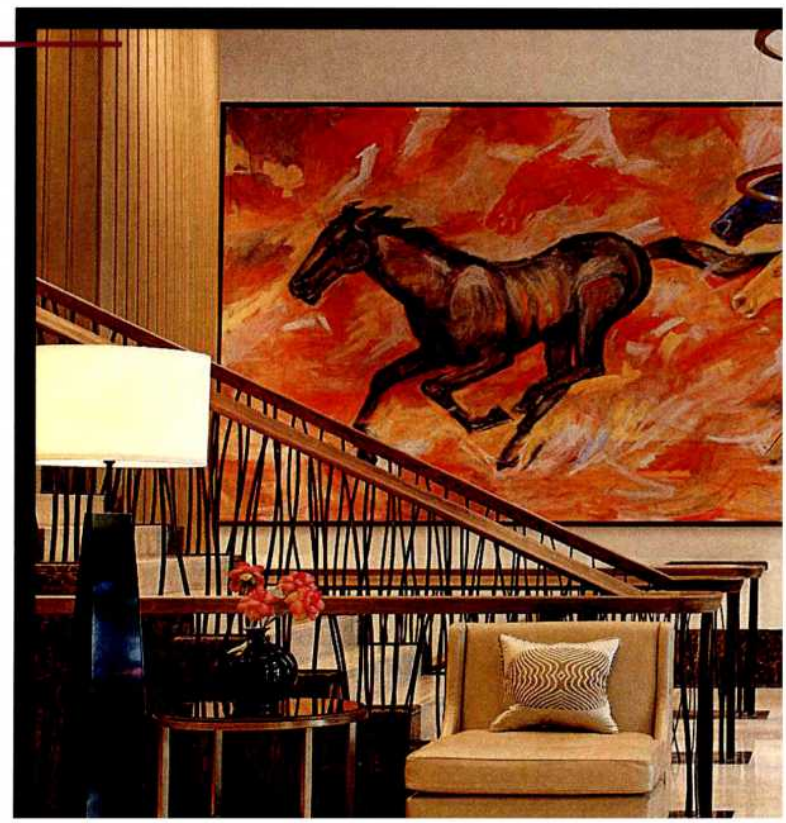
Tariff: Doubles starts at ₹24,222; Tel +1 866 784 1300; Email Reservations@gramercyparkhotel.com

Art Revival

Ritz-Carlton Vienna, Austria

In grand Viennese style, the Ritz-Carlton property is housed in not one but four 19th-century palaces at the elegant and centrally located Vienna Ringstraβe. The hotel's exterior is classically opulent, yes, but it's the property's interiors that make it special. Reopened recently after massive renovation, the hotel's revamped public spaces and 202 rooms–approximately a quarter of which are suites–reflect the city's penchant for creatively blending the old and the new. While the original Ritz-Carlton's décor channeled a classical look with frescoed ceilings, intricate carved paintings and sumptuous fabrics, the new look amalgamates the historical art and architecture with a neutral colour palette, contemporary woodwork, clean and straight lines on the furniture, and modern artworks of horses in the lobby. The result is exciting – and very Vienna, in the most refreshing sense

Tariff: Starts from ₹26,567 per night on twin sharing; Tel +43 1 31188; Email reservations.vienna@ritzcarlton.com



Oh Henry!

Henry Jones Art Hotel, Hobart, Australia

Imagine a robust collection of 300 original works of art by emerging and established Tasmanian artists juxtaposed on the wharf side of a former jam warehouse, circa 1804. Combine that with a room design that integrates the original features of the warehouse into uniquely laid-out space, (think, glassed-over stone wall shower). Now, imagine falling asleep in this art gallery or dining among the marvellous pieces on display, and you have a basic idea of the heady cocktail of art and architecture that the Henry Jones Art Hotel throws at you.

Aside from living amongst the works during your stay, you can also take home your favourite piece, as all the works are for sale.

Tariff: ₹19,299 per night on twin sharing; Tel +61 3 6210 7700; Email reservations@thehenryjones.com

Paris Je T'aime!

Le Royal Monceau Raffles, Paris

A few steps away from the Champs Elysees, the Le Royal Monceau Raffles hotel in Paris has been transformed into a modern palace infused with the French spirit. Imagined by renowned interior designer Philippe Starck, the hotel creates a luminous environment with attention to detail and fiercely original design aesthetics. The rooms are conceived as artist's studios and feature forties-inspired décor and fine-art photography.

Elsewhere in the hotel, you can find lifesize installations of wooden deer and elk, an exhibition space and an art bookshop. For some off-duty art soirees, consult the art concierge at the hotel who provides a weekly diary of must-see art events in Paris.

Tariff: Doubles start at ₹57,983; Tel 00 33 1 42 99 88 00; Email bookus.paris@raffles.com

Rome Sweet Rome

Rome Cavalieri, Via Alberto Cadlolo, Rome

Set within a 15-acre private park on the hill of Monte Mario, with incredible views of Rome and the Vatican City, this magnificent five-star hotel is equally breathtaking on the inside. The hotel is home to one of the greatest private art collections in the world. There are Warhols and Indianas, Bacchanalian frescoes, Old Masters to contemporary art, from French antiques to rare tapestries, sculpture and ceramics: it is an art lover's paradise. The experience is likened to guests living within a private art exhibition where art abounds at every corner rather than something to be viewed from the other side of a museum guard rope.

If you happen to be staying at the Rome Cavalieri, we recommend that you make time for a guided art tour of the property with an in-house art historian.

Tariff: ₹32165 a room on twin sharing; Tel +39 06 3509 2031; Email RomeCavalieri. Reservations@waldorfastoria.com

From Tokyo with Love

Guppy by ai will take you to gastronomical heaven, one bite at a time. BY SAURAV BHANOT

FOR MOST PEOPLE, EATING BEGINS WITH seeing – usually with the first step into a restaurant. At Guppy by ai, designer Anshu Arora gives you the experience of a wonderland – with lion fish lights, Japanese kokeshi dolls and many a Japanese antique wonder drenched in pop shades of green and pink. Even before you take a seat, you're sold on the restaurant.

Start your meal with the guppy house salad, which bustles up your taste buds with delectable flavours of bamboo shoot, karashi mustard and crunchy vegetables and gives you a sneak peek into the Japanese culinary extravaganza you're going to explore. The tenderloin tataki in soy dressing is another masterstroke from Chef Vikram Khatri's kitchen that will floor you with its unique flavour and melt-in-the-mouth meat.

The light mushroom gyoza, kept light through its bottom steamed preparation, does wonders for your palate. However, the prawn version of the dish – which comes across as a little overcooked – isn't really appetising.

Pork belly
Guppy house salad

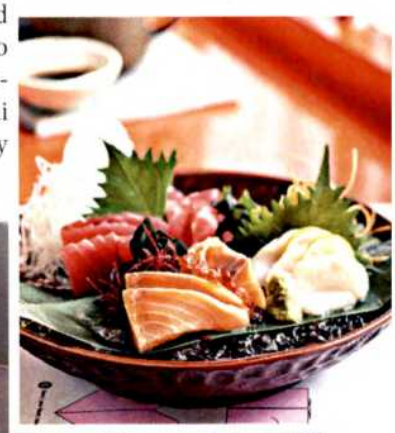
Meal for two
(alcohol extra)
₹2,000

28, Main Market,
Lodhi Colony,
New Delhi

011-24690005

Since nothing spells Japanese better than the classic sushi, Guppy by ai gives you an entire list of sushi and sashimi to choose from. While I would wholeheartedly recommend the salmon and tuna sashimi, the one must-try dish on the menu is the restaurant's signature pork belly. Glazed with soy honey and served with mustard miso sauce on the side, this is single-handedly the best reason you should head to the place. The pork is soft, soaked in flavour, and among the best you'll ever have. The chashu ramen or homemade egg noodles is also an option worth exploring.

Round off your meal with either carrot cake or lemon cheesecake; you don't have much of a choice, given the restaurant's limited dessert menu. But, to answer the big question, is Guppy by ai worth a visit? I'd say it's worth a lot more!



Guppy by ai is a treat for the senses, visual as well as gastronomical ▲

The Bandra wing of Maritime by San Lorenzo retains 90 per cent of the original menu ▲
The insalata di gamberoni ▶

Italian Exotica

San Lorenzo has come to Bandra, and it is exactly what the city's celebrity lipsmackers always wanted. BY SUHANI SINGH

IT'S NOT EVERY DAY THAT YOU WALK INTO A restaurant at a five-star hotel, and the staff promises food that seems straight from home (if it's in Italy, that is). That's what we got when we arrived at Taj Lands End Hotel's newest restaurant, Maritime by San Lorenzo. The eatery has opted for Italian cuisine, a move that's likely to be welcomed by Bandra's resident Bollywood celebrities who usually head to the Mezzo Mezzo in Juhu to partake in their pasta. This is the first time San Lorenzo, which celebrates its golden jubilee in October, has ventured out of the UK. Taking charge of their Indian wing are Alessandro Bechini and Marco Foroni, two San Lorenzo-trained Italian chefs, and – according to executive chef Anirudhya Roy – 90 per cent of the actual menu has been retained.

We started the evening at the bar with prosecco, an Italian sparkling wine, from an array of tasty tipples that included prosecco cocktails, sgroppino and negroni. Delicious and perfect for the meal.

The salmon carpaccio – with thin slices of the Norway-imported fish marinated to perfection with sea salt, brown sugar and herbs – instantly got our thumbs up. Though you will not find the word 'pizza' on the compact two-page menu, do try the focaccia tartufata – which comes as close as it can get to Italy's favourite export. The thin-crusted focaccia with rucola, parmigiano and a sprinkling of truffle oil is a must-have.

In the mains, the lasagna with spinach and lamb and spaghetti with freshly diced tomatoes and basil lived up to the definition of great flavourful homemade food. While the lamb chops were a tad tough, the prawns in the risotto – unfortunately – were slightly overdone. But that, we realised, was little more than a minor grievance given everything else on the menu.

As we sipped on the fruity bellini and prosecco combined with peach puree, we found ourselves debating the need for dessert. But then, no Italian meal is complete without the tiramisu. With a few spoons of the delicious dessert and some of the home-made vanilla, chocolate and raspberry sorbets, we stepped out to witness the Arabian sea in all its glory. It was the perfect end to a sublime maritime experience.

Salmon carpaccio
Focaccia tartufata

Meal for two
(alcohol extra)
₹3,500

Taj Land's End,
Bandra, Mumbai

022-66681234

Two players in the premier league

Hublot becomes "Official Timekeeper" for FC Bayern Munich

The Swiss luxury watch brand Hublot, which is known for the "Art of Fusion", is proud to announce its new partnership with the German record champions FC Bayern Munich. There is much more to link this distinguished watch brand with the successful football club than the fact that they are both among the elite in their fields. They both live by the "Art of Fusion". The art of combining traditional values with innovative visions.

Hublot can already look back on various top-class experiences in the world of top-flight football. As pioneers in their sector, the luxury watch brand first committed themselves to football in 2006 and they have since worked extremely closely with FIFA as "Official Timekeeper" and "Official Watch" for the FIFA Football World Cup™. And they will also enjoy the same partnership with UEFA for EURO 2012. As the winner of six European cups, of which four were in the Champions League, FC Bayern Munich is one of the five most successful clubs at a European level. Thanks to the new partnership with FC Bayern Munich – one of the most successful and most lucrative football clubs with one of the largest groups of supporters – Hublot reinforce their presence in the world of top-flight football.

"We are extremely proud to have been able to attract FC Bayern Munich as a partner since we share the same values: raw passion, a love for perfection and technical precision right down to the smallest detail." declared Jean-Claude Biver, Chairman of Hublot.

"We are excited about our new partnership with Hublot because we look for strong partners with whom we not only can aim for common goals, but also make those goals a reality." added Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, Chief Executive Officer at FC Bayern München AG.

About Hublot – The exclusive history of the Art of Fusion – Hublot first made its name 30 years ago: during this era, it was the first prestigious Swiss watch brand to fuse precious metals with natural rubber. It sparked a genuine revolution in material innovation and aesthetics. In 2004, Jean-Claude Biver – one of the few people to have genuinely made their mark on Swiss watchmaking – gave Hublot a great new boost and revolutionised watchmaking with the creation of the "Big Bang". This multiple award-winning chronograph, with its contemporary and distinguished design, marked the start of the brand's spectacular success. Today, Hublot continues to write the story of the Art of Fusion, with a pioneering combination of unusual materials – ceramic, carbon, tantalum, tungsten, titanium and rubber – with traditional, time-tested materials such as gold, platinum, steel, diamonds and precious stones. And despite its new hi-tech watchmaking manufacture near Geneva and its impressive growth, the brand remains true to Swiss tradition, yet enriched with the visionary creativity of the 21st Century.

The Tissot Couturier duo's style shines bright under the twinkling stars of festive season's nights

The festive season is a time of celebration. As family and friends gather, everyone wants to immortalise the special moments. To make them truly unforgettable, Tissot has the perfect gift. The Tissot Couturier duo watches. These pieces will light up the eyes of the ones they are destined for and monopolise the spotlight during the great festive season evenings, outshining the fairy lights and candle flickers. These timepieces, just like the creations of the world's greatest fashion designers rely on the perfect mix of fabric and cut, blend elegant lines with materials to match so that their wearers can strike the pose in style and remember that time forever. These convey the message that you will be there to provide a boost of confidence for future plans and that no matter how much time goes past you will always be there.

Tissot Couturier Automatic Lady

The Tissot Couturier Automatic Lady pays tribute to today's women's strength and beauty as it is strong with its stainless steel bracelet yet beautifully refined with its mother-of-pearl dial decorated with 22 Top Wesselton diamonds and fine hands. This stunning piece will suit any occasion, adding style and elegance to every outfit with a high-fashion couture attitude and grace with a hint of glamour. With a Tissot Couturier on their wrist, ladies will find the confidence they need to accomplish their dreams.

Tissot Couturier Automatic Chronograph Gent C01.211

The Tissot Couturier Automatic Chronograph Gent C01.211 will suit those modern gentlemen like a glove. They will be turning heads with their sleek look that combines a symmetrical design with bold counters. Thanks to this combination, this piece can accompany you anywhere and for any events whether they may be important meeting or nights out in the town for which you want to bring out your A game. This is the ideal gift someone you hold dear as it will last a lifetime and remind them of the person that offered it as every second, minute and hour pass.

top shop

Big Screen View

Get set to change the way you view television! Designed by Porsche Design Studio, C Seed 201 is the world's largest outdoor LED TV that sprouts up from the ground in just 40 seconds — unfolding into a massive screen. 15 feet high, the TV is your perfect entertainment option for outdoor events, parties and gatherings. The next time you're hosting a lavish party, you know how to entertain your guests!

Price: On request

Coffee Connection

Here's something to make your evening cup of coffee all the more rejuvenating. This lacquered sliced coffee table with marquetry work by interior expert Radhika Gupta is the perfect addition to your furniture, whether at home or work. The table is part of a new collection at Radhika's store, Moon River, which houses pieces both artistic and contemporary.

Price: ₹3,75,000

Leather Love

Changing seasons require a change in footwear. As boots are rather essential in the winter, these Alexander McQueen Chelsea boots are just what the fashion police ordered. Buckled at the ankles, they are a seductive proposition for any time of the day.

Price: ₹55,000 approx

The Time is Now!

Here's an exciting new watch for you to pair with your outfit, the next time you head out to meet friends. The Gucci Coupe collection now has three new models that are a modern interpretation of vintage watch styles in shades of grey, black and navy blue.

Price: On request

Framed with Perfection

What happens when the best in footwear joins hands with the best in eyewear? You get a pair of sunglasses that you just have to covet. The Carrera by Jimmy Choo shades are what will take you to instant style iconography.

Price: On request

Glittering Tunes

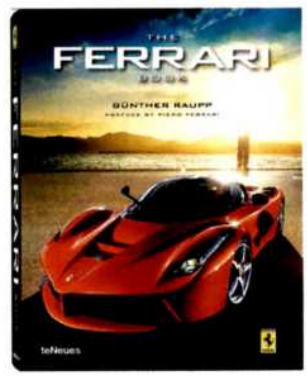
For lovers of the piano, this is as luxurious as it gets. Piano Solutions XXI has launched the New York Serenade Piano, adorned with 1,71,500 hand-set cubic zirconia stones. Designed to invoke memories of New York's Jazz era, the restoration process cost a million dollars!

Price: On request

Bag This

When on an adventure travel spree, having the right bag makes a world of a difference. Wenger's Terrain Crossing Collection that includes upright, duffel bags and rolling backpacks will prove to be your best companion in such scenarios. The bags come in different sizes and are lightweight, strong, spacious and great looking too!

Price: On request

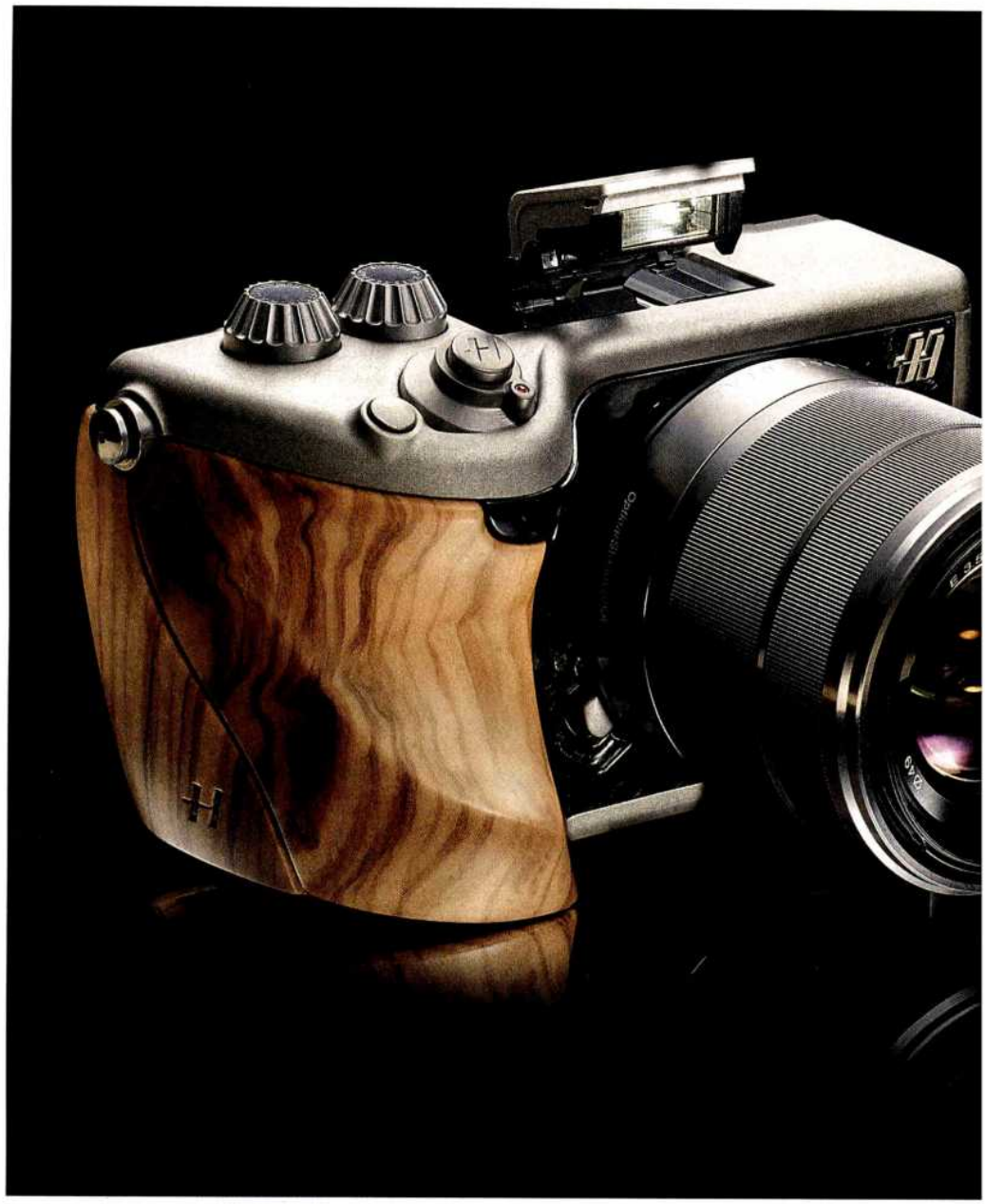


A Book on Wheels

Showcasing every legendary car from the Ferrari stable – right from the 166 SC to the LaFerrari – The Ferrari Book by Guenther Raupp is a must-have for fans of the iconic automobile brand.

Price: ₹1,50,000 approx

splurge



FOR ALL THINGS CLAS

SWEDISH MANUFACTURER HASSELBLAD, WHICH MAKES CAMERAS FOR SOME OF professional photographers, recently launched the Lunar — a state-of-the-art Italian-designed luxu aims to revive the timeless charm of the 500C through its evocative retro look and famous chrome- whose legendary 500EL was used by Neil Armstrong to capture the first images of the moon's su Lunar in the traditional way, using handmade wooden prototypes. However, it is the innovative u puts this model in a league of its own. The frame has been made smooth and supple with a total a specifications match every modern requirement. An aesthetically compelling piece of camera art, weight and design make it a gorgeous object to both hold and behold. **Price on r**

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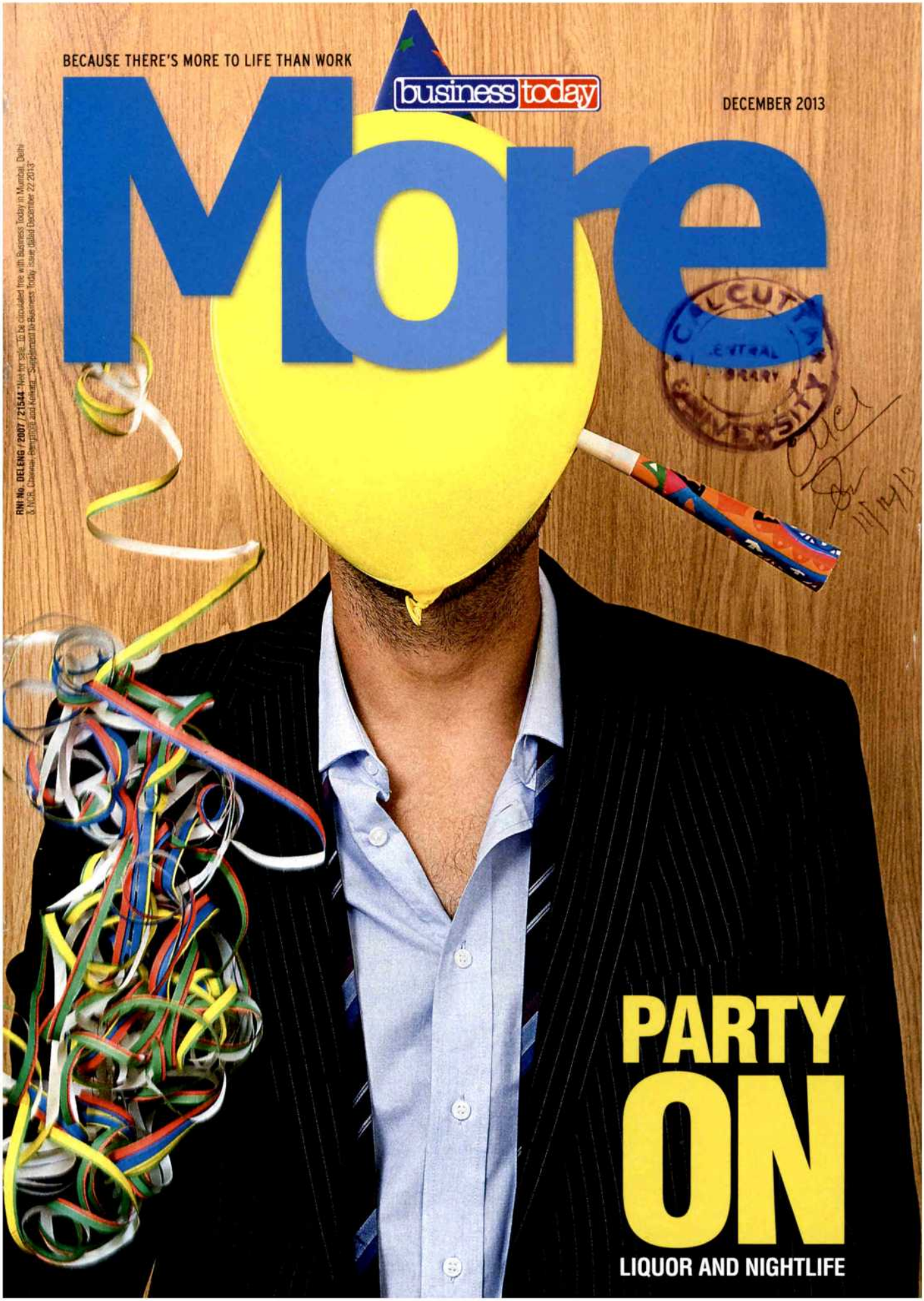
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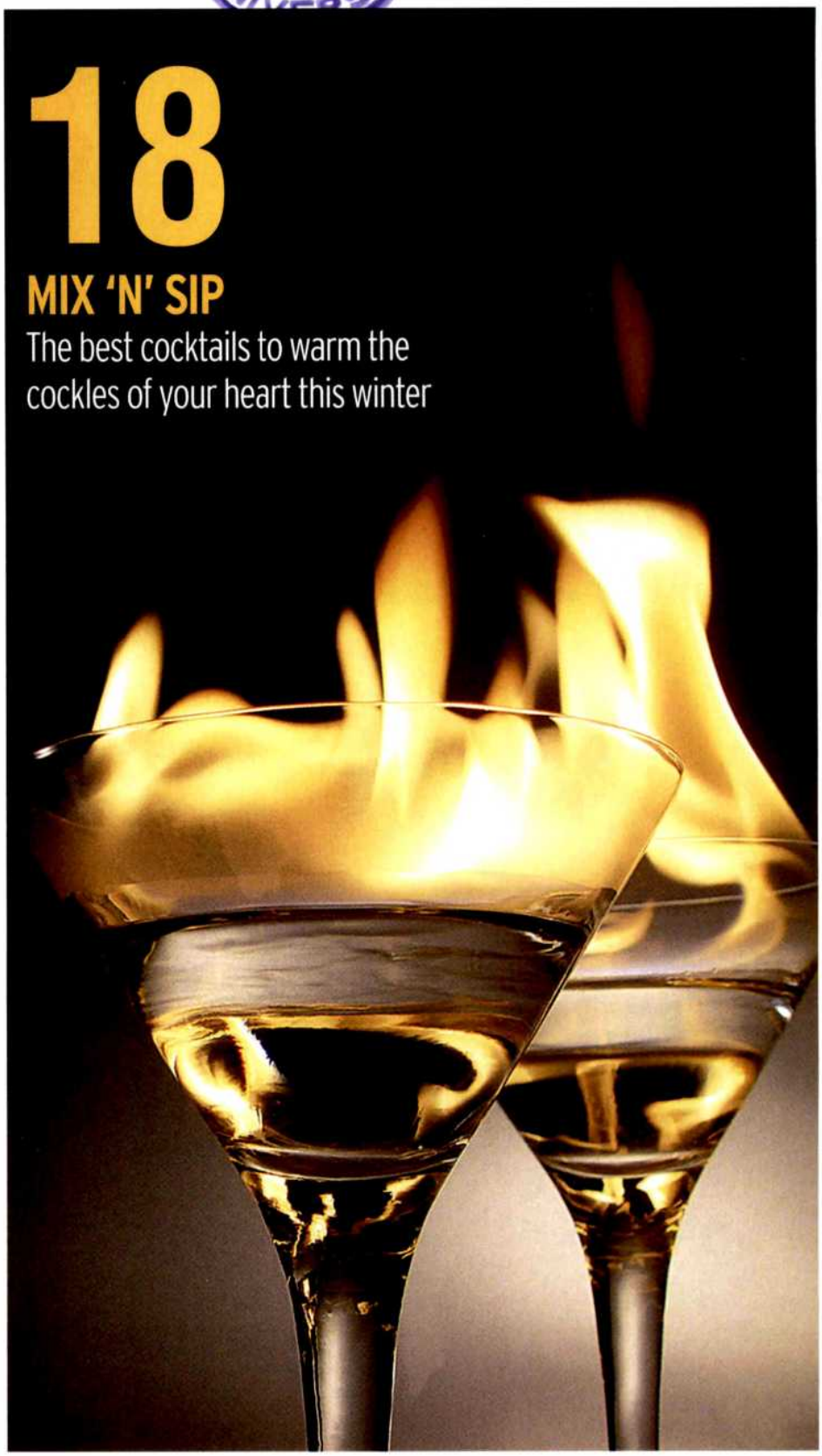
MIX 'N' SIP

The best cocktails to warm the cockles of your heart this winter



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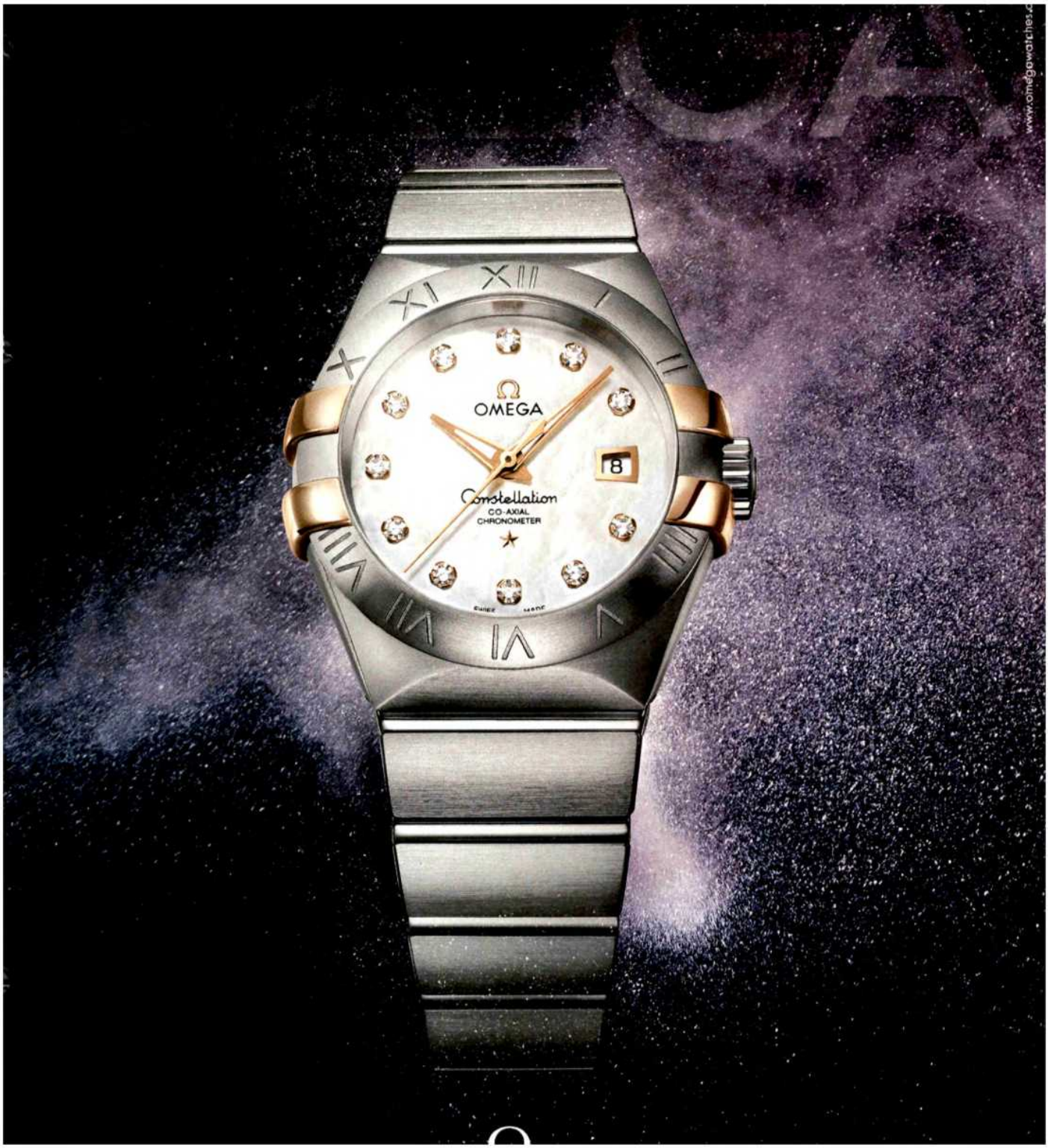
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High on Whisky

David Robertson of Dalmore tells you how to make the best of your whisky investment without slipping into the drink.

SINGLE MALT, NOT BLENDED

Single malt is a much more sought-after form of whisky than blended, and there are three main reasons for this. Firstly, single malts are produced in much smaller quantities than blended, therefore adding to their rarity value. Secondly, single malts are more attractive to the connoisseur, collector and — therefore — the investor, owing to their high quality, individuality, greater age, vintage value, etc. Thirdly, ssingle malt whiskies have a long history of performance, which gives buyers the confidence that this is a sector worth considering.

KNOW WHAT TO PICK

Whisky investing should be based on certain well laid out criteria. Most importantly, pick bottles from well-known, highly respected distilleries that produce fantastic whiskies. All single malt distilleries such as Macallan, The Dalmore, Balvenie and Talisker are smart picks. Silent stills — distilleries that have closed down — are worth looking at too; try Brora, Rosebank or Port Ellen. Limited editions from "premier cru" distilleries can also offer strong value appreciation.

CHOOSE BOTTLES OVER CASKS

Invest in bottles, because then you have a known product, from a known distillery, bottled at a known quality level. When you buy a cask of whisky, you can't be too sure of the quality of the wood and, therefore, the quality. You then have to pay warehouse rent for the cask, shell out more for packaging design, labelling, bottling, etc. You may even end up with a leaky cask that will let your investment flow the wrong way.

(David Robertson had come down to attend an event at the Delhi Duty Free)

4 cool whisky stones

Stainless Steel
Featuring a core filled with a non-toxic gel that chills it inside out, these whisky stones can keep your drink cold for three to five hours after being kept in the freezer just for an hour.

Soapstone
These natural non-porous soapstone cubes are gentler than ice, and sit pretty in your glass while cooling your drink. Each glass needs about three such dark grey stones, which should be refrigerated four hours prior to use.

Granite
Bespeckled hand-cut granite cubes cool the whisky rather than harshly chilling it, leaving the flavour intact. You can plonk them into your drink after just half an hour of refrigeration.

Tilt Chilling Sphere
This centre-weighted stainless steel sphere does not roll about in your glass. Instead, it chills your whisky to perfection and tops it off with an edge of sophisticated glam.

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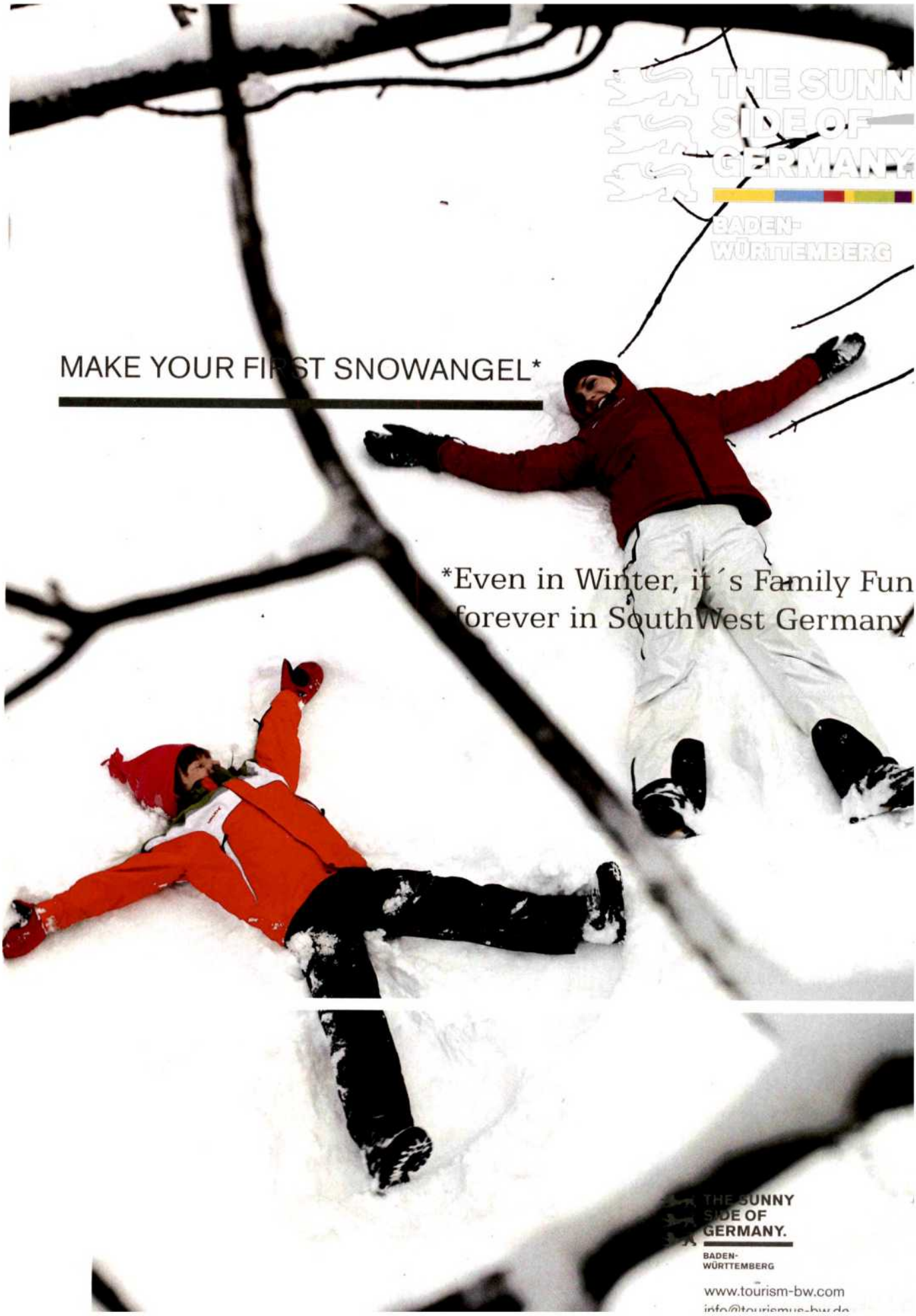
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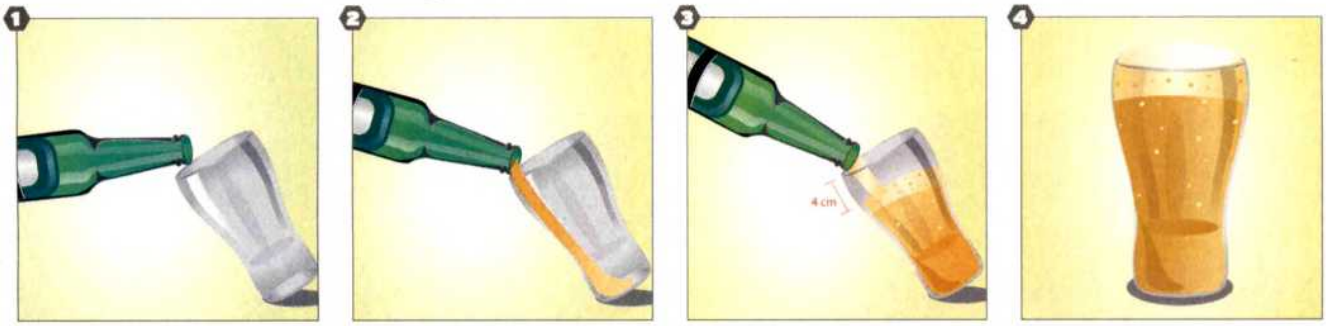
The Art of Pouring Beer



1. Tilt the beer glass at a 45º angle, so that one side rests on the table. Position the beer bottle a few inches above the mid-point of the sloped side of the glass.
2. Begin pouring the beer in a steady stream – targeting the middle of the sloped side of glass – so that the beer flows smoothly down the side without a back-splash.
3. Start turning the glass straight when it is about half-way full. As you add some distance between the bottle and the glass, pour it down its centre.
4. The glass should lie flat when it becomes full, with about one-and-a-half inch of head at the top. Wait a few seconds for the head to settle before drinking.

To Wine Tasting Parties!

WINE TASTING IS NOT ALWAYS AN exercise in snobbery. With proper accompaniments and the right company, you can turn a long afternoon into an entertaining one. So, be bold, host a wine tasting party, and spread the joy.

CHOOSE A THEME

Blind tasting works best if close friends are attending. This makes the atmosphere conducive to different opinions and encourages interaction. To heighten the experience, you could put some effort into the decor and flow of the event.

LOGISTICS

Number You can invite as many friends as you want to, but it is best to limit the number between 8 and 12. Prior knowledge about wines will help. Send your invites two weeks prior to the tasting since you will need to arrange for the wines in accordance with the number of people who RSVP.

Variety Keep a maximum of six-seven wines for each tasting since you do not want your guests to be overwhelmed, numbing their senses in the process. Include one or two wines that most of the guests may not have tasted before.

Sequence Start with a champagne or sparkling wine, then move on to dry whites followed by fuller whites, roses, lighter reds and heavier reds.

Pairing Set out bite-sized food to be had with the wine – like crackers or crostinis. If you're serving dinner, match light whites with seafood and fuller whites with poultry. Stuffed mushrooms and duck sausage is just the thing for full-bodied reds. Pair dessert wines with fresh berries, dark chocolate or tiramisu.

Essentials Pour just one or two ounces into each glass, so your guests don't feel the need to spit. But, to be on the safer side, keep a spitting bucket handy. Place a big pitcher of water on the table and keep separate glasses of water, so your guests can cleanse their palate between drinks. Using a wine pourer effectively releases the aroma.

VIENNA CALLING

Move over, overhyped Paris and soggy London, the Indian tourist has found the ultimate in European exotica.

The Donnerbrunnen Fountain at Neuer Markt, which dates back to 1739 ▲

BILLY JOEL MAY HAVE USED VIENNA as a metaphor in his iconic song by the same name, but for most Indians, the Austrian city does seem to be waiting for them. If a Vienna Tourist Board survey is to be believed, as many as 23,737 Indians visited the city in the 12-month period ending June 23 -- signifying that the city of castles, palaces, gardens and museums is fast emerging as one of the hottest destinations for Indian tourists. While most of the tourists came from Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Bangalore, corporate travellers amounted for as much as 15 per cent of the visitors.

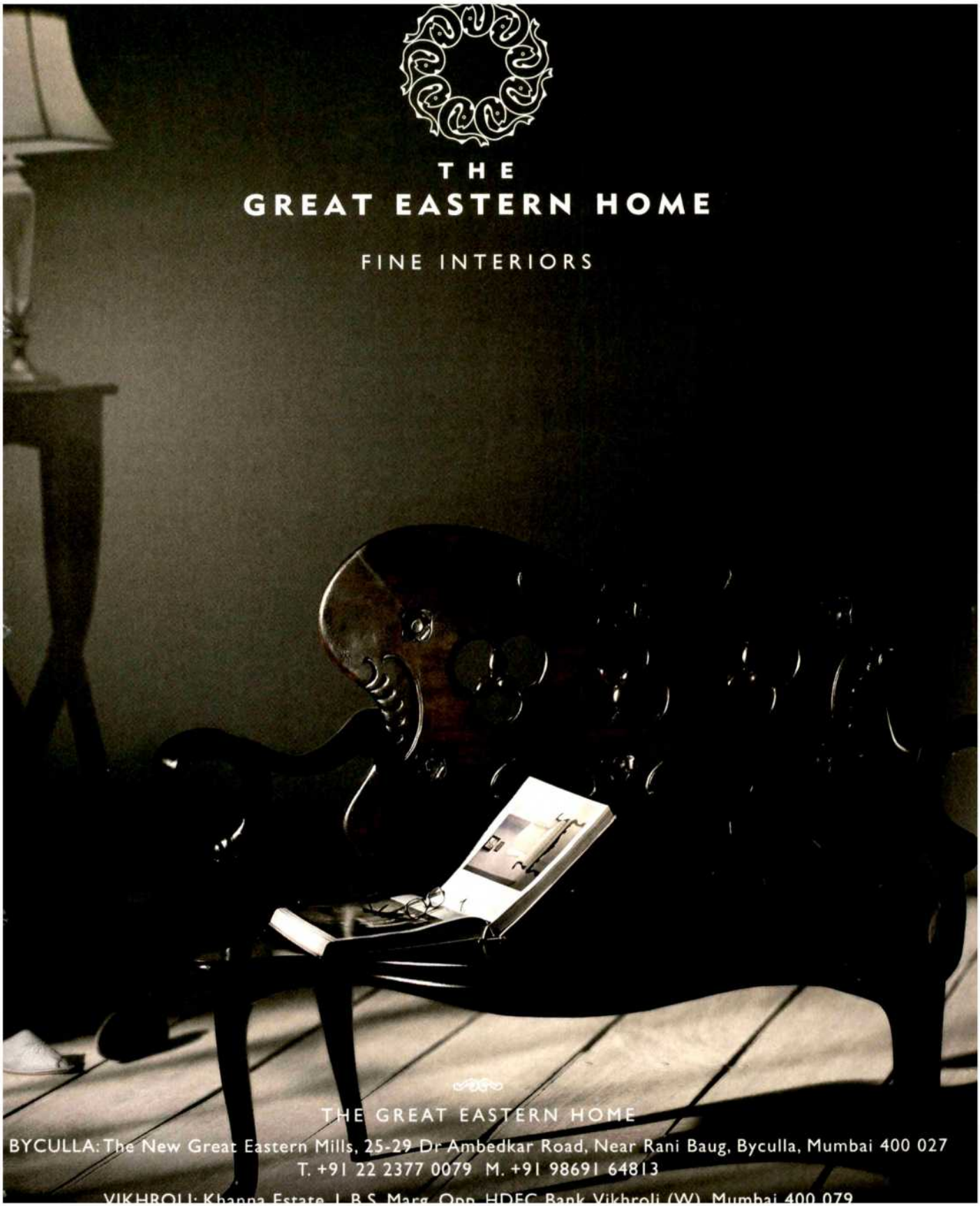
Located in the centre of Europe, Vienna is known to be one of the safest cities in the world. And what's more, the city is dotted with Indian restaurants -- something that could certainly influence any desi tourist's decision to visit a country. The other cities in the region that Indians tend to visit are Budapest and Prague, Vienna tourism officials said.

CHANGI'S TREE OF MEMORIES

Visit the Changi Airport at Singapore, and you are unlikely to forget the experience anytime soon. And now, with the Social Tree - a new attraction that blends avant-garde design with interactive technology - the airport ensures that it doesn't forget you either. Close to nine metres tall and taking pride of place at the heart of Terminal 1, the tree is made up of 64 giant high-definition screens that offer a 360-degree display of various animated backgrounds - including the Singapore skyline. By 'attaching' their photos onto the structure through media booths surrounding it, travellers become a part of Changi's media memory for ages to come.

LUXURY ON TRACK

The well-heeled traveller isn't expected to trot around, especially in Japan. So, if your travels happen to take you to the East Asian island nation, be sure to check out Kyushu Railway's Nanatsuboshi - a rail service complete with a lounge car accommodating a piano and a bar, besides top-end dining and 14 private suites. Each wood-panelled bedroom has plush beds and a desk along with a luxurious ensuite bathroom. The train travels around Kyushu, with a four-day package costing up to $11,000 (₹6,79,221.98) per couple. But hey, don't rush for your cheque book yet - the train is fully booked till June 2014.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SIKKIM IS LONELY PLANET'S PICK

Finally, the long-awaited feather in India's hat! Sikkim has emerged right on top of a list of 10 best destinations to visit, brought to you by Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2014. Australia's Kimberly region followed Sikkim – praised in terms of food and hospitality – in the list of best regions to visit. Paris was picked as the top city destination in another list that also included Cape Town, Shanghai and Chicago. The Greek Islands were seen as the best-value destination by the surveyors.

FOR AN UNBALANCED WEEKEND

Been spending a lot of time at your urban home, its foundations set deep and secure? Maybe it's time for a trip to the Suffolk countryside for a not-so-relaxing weekend spent in a balancing barn. Located on the edge of a wildlife nature reserve and overlooking a small lake, the 30-metre-long Balancing Barn for holidaymakers protrudes from a ridge, leaving half of the building seemingly afloat in midair. Designed by Dutch architectural

The structure protrudes from a ridge, making half the building 'float' in midair ▲

firm MVRDV with the intention of making world-class architecture accessible to adventure-seeking tourists, the unconventional bungalow has exteriors clad in reflective metal tiles and a glass floor for viewing beneath the building. While the bungalow's kitchen equipment is provided by David Mellor Design, the artwork therein comes from Colchester and Ipswich museum in collaboration with the Huntington Collection. All yours to inhabit for £810 (₹79,790)!

GUARD YOUR FLIER MILES!

When was the last time you changed your password and user name for your frequent flier account? We don't blame you if the answer is "never"; you happen to be just one among the many who don't realise how important it is to safeguard these precious little assets. Frequent flier miles are like money, and there are many thieves and scam artistes who devote their time to stealing what is rightfully yours and spending them on flights, selling them, or using them for other nefarious purposes. So, every now and then, take some time off to change your password. And yes, be extra vigilant if you open your account on a public computer.

APP CORNER

India Video Tours

Free (Android)
By My IndiEye

If you are a tourist visiting India, this phone app may be just what you need! Once downloaded, the application allows users over 60 minutes of authentic video content on historic monuments – even taking them on virtual tours. Each tour comes with a GPS-enabled three-dimensional map of the monument for navigation.

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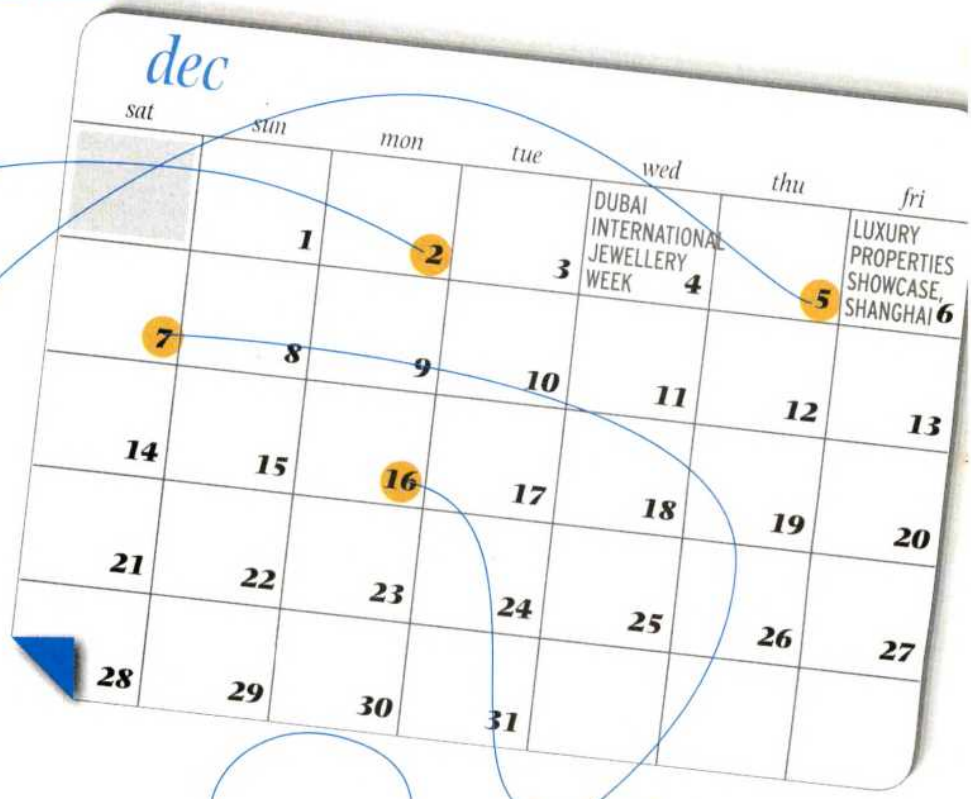

2-5 Dec

INTERNATIONAL LUXURY TRAVEL MARKET, CANNES

Targeting the global luxury travel community, this 'by invitation only' annual event aims to attract exclusive suppliers and buyers through bespoke appointment programmes and networking sessions. The International Luxury Travel Market opens its doors to an established global community of the luxury-travel industry in a time-efficient format. This

year will see up to 1,400 suppliers and exhibitors taking part in the event, which promises only the very best in high-end properties. To know more about the event, visit iltm.net.

5-8 Dec

ART BASEL, MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, USA

With as many as 250 of the world's leading art galleries showcasing masterpieces of modern and contemporary art here, Art Basel is the place to be for all lovers of art. Pay a visit to this venue, and you'll get to see sculptures, paintings, installations and photographs by established as well as upcoming artists. For further information on the event, visit artbasel.com.

7-15 Dec

SALON NAUTIQUE, PARIS, FRANCE

One of the world's leading annual boat shows, Salon Nautique at Paris will see close to 810 exhibitors and 1,400 brands in attendance. The shows will focus on three areas – sailing and tourism, motorboats and equipment. Expect close to 2,50,000 visitors and over 800 different boats. For more information, visit salonnautiqueparis.com.

16- 22 Dec

OLYMPIA HORSE SHOW, LONDON, UK

Love horses? Then, you better buy a ticket to London – and fast! Witness top class international competitions ranging from jumping and dressage to driving at Olympia, an annual show that showcases horse talent for your enjoyment and appreciation. For more information, visit olympiahorseshow.com.

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follow us on

liquor

A Beer Hug, Anyone?

For thousands of years now, beer has been a source of cheer for drinkers as well as brewers. A look at the oldest, yet most misunderstood, liquor in history.

TEXT BY JIMMY J

A barrel of malt, a bushel of hops,
you stir it around with a stick.
The kind of lubrication to make your engine tick,
40 pints of wallop a day will keep away the quacks,
It's only eight pence ha-penny and one and six in tax...
- Old Irish folk song

WHILE THE WHOLE WORLD LOVES ITS BEER enough to have written songs about it, nobody seems to know where it first came from. Some say it originated from a land that now sits in the geographical coordinates of Iran, others say Noah took a keg or two with him into the Ark, and – if you ask one of those jolly ol' fellows at some cozy Dublin pub – they would say it was the brainchild of a blessed man called Charlie Mopps (his name meant to rhyme with barley and hops, the main ingredients of beer).

Few – however – would dare contest the fact that the chilled glass of frothy gold in your hand ranks among the oldest beverages in the world. It was the preferred drink among the pilgrims on the Mayflower, and lack of beer was what made them get off at Plymouth Rock in 1620. It was the beverage that gave the Vikings the courage to battle, and the drink that doubled up as holy water for Franciscan Monks in the Middle Ages. Why, then, would one consider it a lowly cousin of whisky and wine in an otherwise haughty liquor family?

Those dealing in the beer business say that even if that has been the idea till now, it is one that's fast changing – especially among the youth. "Beer is a

trendy drink to be seen with, especially when you are going out with friends or colleagues. Today, young urban consumers are open to experimenting with international brands, trying their hand at beer pairing, and consuming draught beers by the mugful – and this is what's adding the much-needed zing for making the shift," says Rahul Singh, the founder and CEO of Beer Café.

How is the concept of beer actually changing, you may ask. "Well, if you look at it," says Singh, "A few years ago, we could just rattle off four-five beer brands from memory. But now, you get to experience over 54 different brands of the beverage from places across the world. The beer's finally turning 'cool'!"

But Pradeep Gidwani, coach and co-founder of The Pint Room, says that beer has been getting the stepmotherly treatment in India. "In the developed world, beer accounts for anything between 60–80% of all alcohol volumes. However, in India, beer accounts for just around a third of all alcohol volume consumed. This is due to the high level of taxation on beer compared to spirits," he says.

Rohan Jelkie, a liquor expert with beverage education and training institute Tulleeho, says beer is a drink that's usually taken for granted, and not many are aware of its actual history or genealogy.

An undated painting of an 18th century beer parlour in the English countryside ▲

PAIR THAT! When it comes to beer and food, one size doesn't fit all. A look at some pairings

Barbecue

American Stout
English Porter
Irish Dry Stout

Chinese

Czech Pilsener
Japanese Rice Lager
Light Lager

Indian

American Adjunct
English India Pale Ale
Light Lager

Mediterranean

English Pale Ale
Tripel
Light Lager

Italian

American Blonde Ale
American Pale Lager
English Porter

Thai

Belgian Pale Ale
Japanese Rice Lager
Light Lager

Suggestion: The more bitter a beer is, the livelier a meal needs to be to hold its own. If you are having relatively bland food, don't overwhelm the flavour of your food by drinking beer too enriched with hops. And this shouldn't be a problem, given the wide choice of beer at your disposal.

Recalling his early college days, he reminisces about a time when he and his friends would play truant to buy themselves a bottle of 'strong' beer. "Back then," he says, "I thought there were just two kinds of beer – 'light beer' (which has an alcohol content of around 4-5 per cent) and the ultra-Indian 'strong beer' (the alcohol of content of which could rise up to 8.5 per cent)."

Unfortunately, a beverage so ancient deserves more respect and, therefore, a better yardstick for classification. "The simplest way is to classify beers on the basis of how they are fermented – top and bottom," says Jelkie, "Beer that is made with a top-fermenting yeast, the kind that rises to the top of the brew during fermentation, is called ale. Lager, on the other hand, is made with a cold-fermenting yeast that sinks to the bottom of the brew during the fermentation process."

Though both contain the same ingredients, ale and lager can be as different as night from day. Ales are fruity, aromatic, robust-tasting, and quite capable of being complex on the taste buds. Lagers – on the other hand – are lighter, crisp, smooth and tend to have a more subtle taste. Also, while ales are supposed to be enjoyed warmer – between 7-12 degrees Celsius, lagers are ideally meant to be served at anywhere between 3-7 degrees Celsius. And then there's warm beer (usually found and served in England), served typically between 10-14 degrees Celsius and said to be particularly beneficial on cold London nights. But wait, didn't somebody say that beer was more of a summer drink, something you have to cool off on a hot July afternoon? "Not true," says Jelkie, "While light pilsner-styled lagers are meant for warmer conditions, there are specialty beers like Rochefort that are brewed for cold months. Full-bodied and flavoursome ales are appreciated in the winter too."

Although beer is said to be the third-most consumed drink in the world, after water and tea, there are many facts about the beverage that are still largely unknown. For example, few know that beer can be paired with different kinds of food, much like wine. Says the beer expert from Tulleeho, "While pairing, try following the 3 C's rule for eating – cut, complement and contrast. For greasy foods like a margherita pizza, you would need the crispness of a chilled lager to cut through the food. A good full-bodied ale, on the other hand, should do well for a flavour-rich BBQ meat dish. At times, a contrast-pairing might work wonders – say, by putting a sweet-and-aromatic Belgian wheat beer on the same table as some spicy Thai chicken satay!"

According to experts, you can use beer to add flavour — just like you would oregano or thyme. While bitter IPAs and sweet barley wines can be vital to any recipe, seasonal ingredients can be matched with seasonal beers. For example, dark and rich beers work perfectly with stews and braised meats. Also, it's preferable to start a meal with lighter beers and then move up to stronger, more complex beers. You may not have the stomach for a lot more if you kick off dinner with an imperial stout.

However, when it comes to comparisons with whiskies and wines, a drawback that beer does face is limitations on the investment front. While the former ripen with age, thereby making them more valuable as time goes by, beers – with rare exceptions such as the Chimay Grand Reserve – come with an expiry date. Investing in beer bottles or kegs, therefore, makes little sense for collectors.

It's a drawback Jelkie admits to, but that's not enough to make him lose all faith in his favourite drink. "Beer's still a good investment," he says, "Open a beer cafe and watch the people walk in!"

Draught beer, poured from a tap, is all the rage among the urban youth today ▲

Cocktail Tales

While some would object to 'contaminating' good liquor, you have to agree that a lip-smacking cocktail has its own merits. Presenting the best in a glass.

TEXT BY JIMMY J

IN AN AGE WHERE NO UBER-COOL PARTY SEEMS complete without an ice-cold Martini or an orange-spiked Screwdriver, the humble origin of the cocktail may get a tad difficult to comprehend.

After all, how can you convince the jet-setting gentleman with the tall glass of Bee's Knees that the honey in his drink is a fall-back on the 1919–1933 prohibition era, when the sweet-tasting juice was meant to mask the putrid flavour of illegal liquor? Or the fact that the lemon juice in his Sidecar was actually meant to help the drinker down his poison in one go, just in case the authorities come-a-raiding.

Times have changed, and alcohol has become more of a connoisseur's delight than a veritable poison that's meant to help you sleep after a long day's work in the coal fields. Nevertheless, cocktails remain a delight, and they serve an aesthetic purpose that goes way beyond helping you gulp down a liquid that's better suited for your kitchen sink. A look at the coolest cocktails built on whisky, vodka and gin

Whisky Lullabies

While connoisseurs swear that whisky is a liquor best downed straight, it has also been unanimously crowned as the king of classic cocktails. And, believe us, it's not just the non-puritans who like their whisky spiked with delectable alien ingredients.

For starters, try the **Old Fashioned Whisky Cocktail** – which has a 150-year-old history of being loved. Way back in the American 1860s, all you had to do to get one of these high-powered babies was slam your hand down on the bar counter and yell, "A whisky cocktail, please!". But when the Manhattan and Mint Julep came along, people felt the need to specify that it was the "old fashioned" kind they wanted – and as things go, the name stuck. A drink primarily made of bourbon and a dash of angostura bitters, fruits are not welcome in the Old Fashioned. With the exception of the mandatory orange rind, of course.

Alternatively, you may try the **Boston Sour**, the next on our list of try-before-you-die whisky cocktails. A variant of the whisky sour, but with a dash of egg white, it is perfect for a cold winter's night or a cool-ish morning treat. Containing whisky (often Bourbon), lemon juice and ice, it is as simple to make as it is exotic. The egg white, for its part, gives the cocktail a bit of fizz and thickness while retaining its inherent strength.

Arjit Bose, a master-mixologist with the Bacardi Legacy Team, says that one of his favourite whisky concoctions comes from the tiki cocktail culture, which is currently in vogue around the world. His favourite is the **Halekulani**, a tangy preparation made of unsweetened pineapple juice, orange juice and grenadine (among other things) that is sure to warm the cockles of the hardest heart. "Named after a famous hotel by the same name in Waikiki, Honululu, this particular drink is served with an orchid," says Bose.

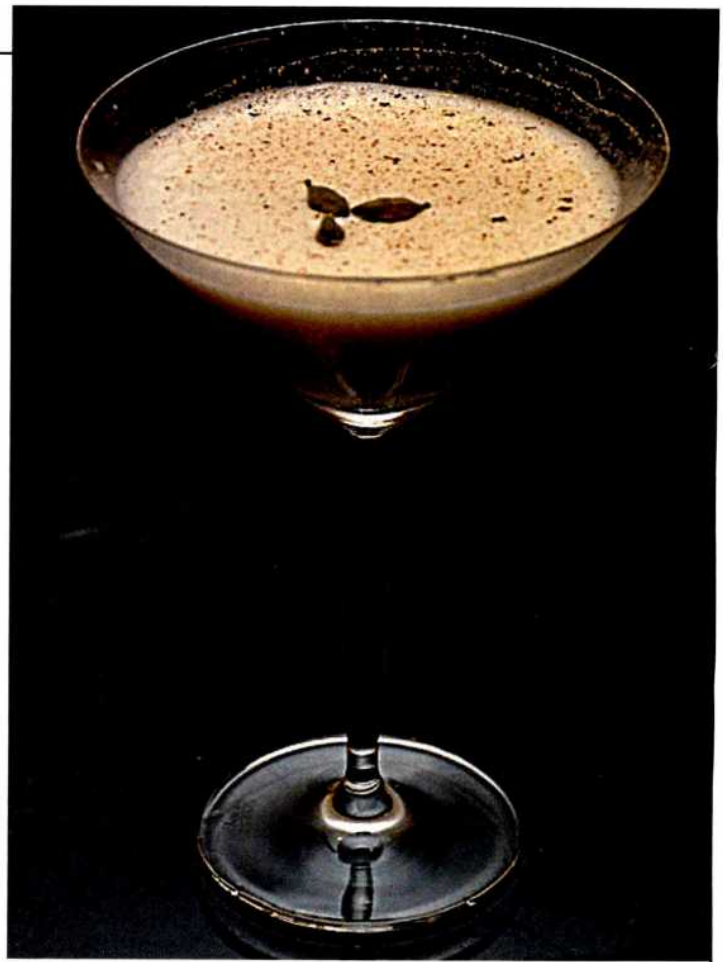
liquor

Vodka Connection

Vodka, being the most neutral of liquors, pays perfect homage to the Slavic word for water (voda) and becomes the very factor that makes it conducive for the creation of modern cocktails. And a good thing too – where would we be without some well-deserved Sex on the Beach after a hard day's work?

Picture this: It's chilly outside, and you need a little something to warm the cockles of your heart. We recommend that you reach out for a refreshing **Candy Cane**, created by Charles Corpion, author of *The Four Seasons Book of Cocktails*. Brimming with strawberry vodka, creme de menthe, cranberry juice and sporting a rim of powdered candy, it's just what you oughta offer Santa if he comes tumbling down your chimney.

For days you wake up feeling like Jeff "The Dude" Lebowski, we recommend the **White Russian** — a sweet cocktail classically made with vodka, coffee liqueur and cream served with ice in an Old Fashioned glass. An alternative method to make the White Russian? Make yourself a Black Russian, add some cream and — ta da! Best had in a faded bathrobe, sitting on a Persian rug, with *Tumbling Tumbleweeds* playing in the backdrop.



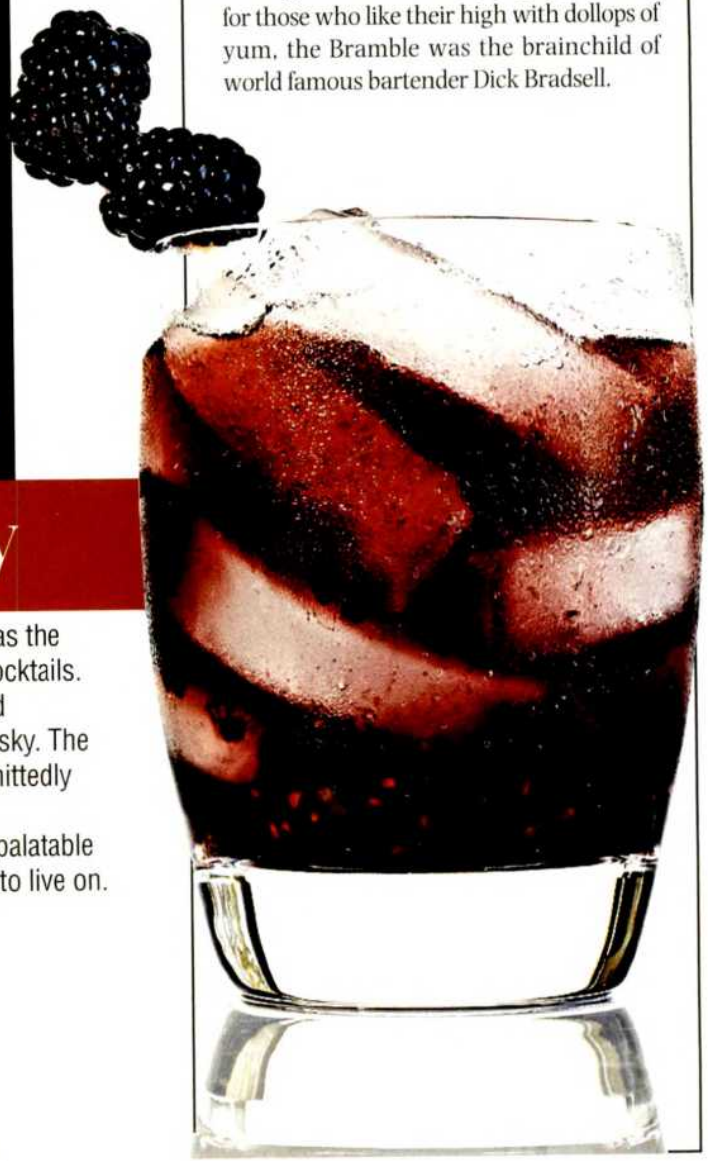
If an Indian flavour is more your thing, try the **Lapsang Smoked Lassi**, created by mixologist-cum-Tigre Blanc brand ambassador Ulric Nijs. "Nothing highlights the spicy notes of the vodka more than this variant of the lassi, with active help from cinnamon!" gushes Nijs. Ask him for the recipe, and he relates an intriguing narrative involving tea leaves, cardamom, honey and yoghurt. Taste it, and you probably wouldn't want anything else that night.

If we were to leave Agent 007 and his favourite drink alone, the first gin-based cocktail of our choice would be **The Last Word** – a potent mix of gin, green Chartreuse, maraschino liqueur and freshly pressed lime juice, shaken well. While legend has it that the drink started off as a prohibition-era cocktail developed at the Detroit Athletic Club, it recently achieved new-found popularity owing to bartender Murray Stenson's stint at the Zig Zag Cafe, Seattle. A drink that hits you hard, there is no arguing with this one.

Gin-Soaked Joy

This liquor has been around for quite a while, but it was the prohibition era that turned it into a popular base for cocktails. Alcohol was prohibited but the demand was huge, and bootleggers found gin easier to manufacture than whisky. The result was bathtub gin, a spurious liquid that was admittedly hard to swallow in the absence of sweetening agents. But years have passed by, and gin has become more palatable now. However, the cocktails it once inspired continue to live on.

Moving on, we get to **The Bramble** – one of the most popular gin cocktails to emerge in recent times. Best made with Bombay Sapphire gin, the other ingredients that go in a typical Bramble glass are fresh lemon juice, sugar syrup, float of creme de mure and a generous blackberry topping. A drink for those who like their high with dollops of yum, the Bramble was the brainchild of world famous bartender Dick Bradsell.



If the first two gin concoctions have done you in, and you wake up the next morning with a splitting hangover, the classic **Corpse Reviver No. 2** could be just what the doctor ordered. With ingredients that include gin, lemon juice, littet blanc, cointreau and a dash of absinthe, the drink is refreshing enough to perk up the senses immediately. And don't worry, you won't have a zombie epidemic on your hands.

Ballantine's Day

They say Ballantine's brews magic, not alcohol. A walk through the fascinating process that brings the world its second most favourite whisky.

TEXT BY ADITI PAI

▲ The copper stills at the Glenburgie Distillery where the whiskies for the Ballantine's blends are made
◀ The Castle Stuart Golf Links by the waters of the Moray Firth in Inverness, which hosted the Scottish Open Golf Championship 2013

IT'S HARD TO DODGE THREE legends when you are in the Scottish Highlands — golf, whisky and haggis. Expanses of green line the 160-km drive from Aberdeen to Inverness; stately, built-in-stone distilleries urge you to pull up into their winding driveways, and quaint cafes whisper fanciful stories about haggis – especially if you are a visitor looking for a sizeable legend.

The city of Inverness is unusually busy and uncharacteristically warm even for a July afternoon. The otherwise quiet airport area witnesses a flurry of arrivals, even as cars zoom across to the epicentre of activity—the Castle Stuart Golf Links, where the Scottish Open Golf Championship is being hosted. The Scottish proudly claim that it's one of the most scenic golf courses, with a sprawling green expanse cradled by the placid waters of the Moray Firth. Players and fans from countries across the globe converge here, a crowd that Inverness sees annually. At Ballantine's all-white sponsors' tent, Peter Moore, the company's international brand director, explains: "Scotch whisky and golf are the most famous exports from Scotland."

Ballantine's, ranked as the world's number two Scotch whisky, sealed its relationship with golf way back in 1960 when the company sponsored the Ballantine's Tournament in Wentworth. Over the past half century, the company has nurtured its relationship with golf, sponsoring events and players, especially in key business markets like Korea and Taiwan. According to Moore, "Both are a blend of tradition and dynamism. Golf has amazing personalities and flair players who stick to the traditions of the game while bringing their own style to it. Our whiskies do the same."

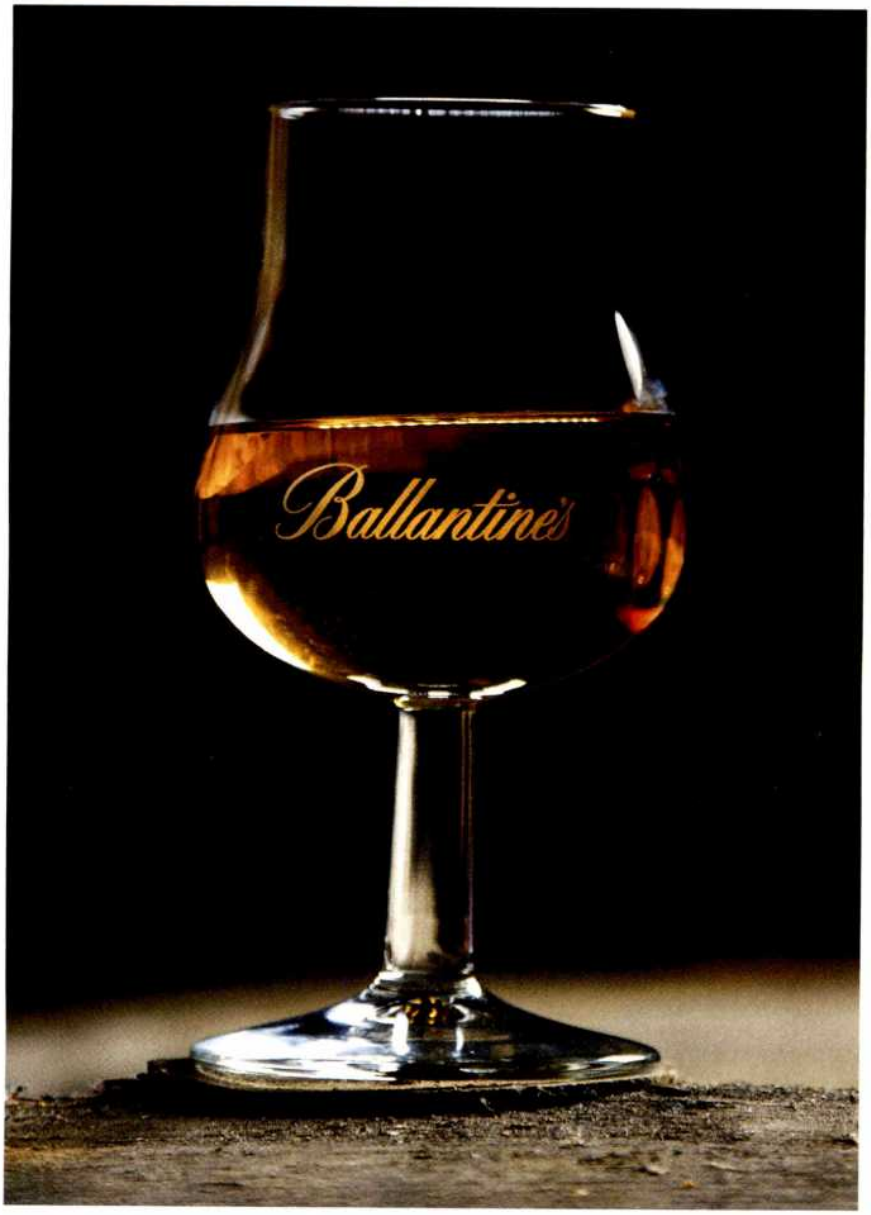
The Glenburgie distillery, which brews malts used in Ballantine's blends, symbolises this marriage of the traditional and contemporary. It's a grand stone structure, built in 1810, that sits just off the Inverness-Aberdeen road near the town of Forres. Originally called the Kilnflat Distillery, it was brought into the Pernod Ricard family and revamped in 2005. Unlike several other distilleries in Speyside that conduct tours and tastings, Glenburgie is off-limits for walk-in visitors. But if you manage to put in a special request and enter, it opens up a fascinating world where whiskies are carefully crafted from the grain and malt that grow in the region's lush farmlands.

Inside Glenburgie, the reception centre welcomes guests with six bottles of Ballantine's blends displayed in a backlit white counter. Distiller Ian Logan takes over, explaining the process. The Porteus mill, a remnant from the original distillery, leads us to a large hall where a wall-mounted map of Scotland and a rotating table loaded with barley, maize, grains and peat gives a crash course in the whisky-making process. Over the next half hour, as Logan walks us through the distillery's various sections, unfamiliar jargon like grist, wort and wash gradually comes to life. A warm, sweet aroma wafts through the large hall as the fermented malt transforms into a flavourful amber

liquid in the gleaming copper stills. Glenburgie produces over 4.2 million litres of the spirit every year. Though the production values continue to stick to tradition, innovations have seeped into the stable with the launch of the Ballantine's 40 and a Christmas blend, reminiscent of cake flavours by master blender Sandy Hyslop, four years ago.

Our next stop is nothing short of a treasure trove—a dunnage warehouse with stone walls and earthen floors stretching endlessly—neatly stacked with oak casks. These casks lend their varied aromas from vanilla to tobacco to the distilled spirit to complete the crafting of the amber liquid. Sepia-tinted labels recall details of the origin of the whisky locked up inside the heavy wooden casks. The celebrated Ballantine's blends combine whiskies from several distilleries—big and small—across Scotland and have a total of six million casks across their various distilleries. George Ballantine, a master blender of his time, pioneered blending to combine the best of the four whisky producing regions of Scotland. Much like wines, whiskies reflect the characteristics of the soil, climate and water, often from natural springs. The brews of Glenburgie revel in their fruity flavours and the smoky hints of peat found in abundance in the region. Ballantine's 40, launched two years ago, was a result of the founder's vision of maturing his whiskies to build the Ballantine heritage.

▼ Ballantine's whisky in their signature glass



In the tasting room, where a platter of whisky-filled Ballantine's engraved glasses awaits, Logan gives us the liberty to let our taste buds and imagination run wild, sniffing familiar aromas and conjuring up images of everything from peaches to tobacco. Don't just gulp it down, he says. Swirl, sip and swallow — that is the mantra. A tip — wait for the "gum-tingling" feeling and then let the warmth trickle down your throat.

There's something special in every glass. Ballantine's Finest, blended with 40 fine malt and grain whiskies, is light gold with a hint of soft heather honey; the 12-year-old is truly "Scotland in a Bottle" with the fruit flavours of Speyside, the peatiness of the islands and a touch of peach and apricot .

To whet our palates further, Logan took us for a rare treat—to a tiny warehouse for a sip of a 1967 brew. The flavours of caramel, banana and oak exploded in the very first sip. It was one of the six million casks that hold whiskies which go into Ballantine's various blends.

No celebratory dinner in Scotland is complete without the haggis-cutting ceremony that inspires several stories about its origin and the 'Address to a Haggis' by poet Robert Burns. As the sun finally sets on Inverness and the Ballantine's 30 flows freely, the chatter at the Indian golfers' table – with Jeev Milkha Singh and SSP Chowrasia – veers towards golf, Scotch and films. And you realise, once again, that these three legends follow you everywhere when you're in Scotland.

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TEXT BY ANINDITA SATPATHI

LOUNGE HOPPER

If you're the life of the party and your fashionably late arrival is welcomed with whoops of joy, don't think twice about letting yourself go. You are, in all likelihood, the guy who burns up the dance floor, getting more interesting with every drink but remaining the perfect gentleman through it all. You are in your element in lounge bars and there are more than just a few women who would like to groove and do the shimmy with you. You are picky about the bars you want to grace with your presence, and your favourite hotspots have a judicious mix of the latest lounge and techno-rock numbers that set the stage for letting your hair down. You like your spiced and punchy cocktails to keep coming, and you've tried pretty much each one of those mentioned in the menu. Being friendly comes naturally to you and being at your affable best ensures that you are on a first-name basis with every second person at the bar — no matter how crowded it gets. You are the crowd pleaser, show stopper and good looker all rolled into one. And did I mention that you love being under the spotlight every moment into the party?

Had a hard day at work? Put on your dancing shoes, let your hair down and dance away your blues.

What hits the spot

DELHI Spilling into the verdant lawns of the Samrat Hotel, **Shiro** reminds you of a chameleon as it morphs from a suave nightclub on Saturday to a cheery brunch venue every Sunday. It tugs at your finer sensibilities in each avatar, but we suggest not missing the Saturday party in this steppe-style, oriental-themed nightclub. *Starts from ₹20,000.*

PUBS OVER CLUBS

If you prefer jangly guitars and folksy acoustics accompanied by mammoth mugs of frothy ale and hearty meals of venison and mashed potatoes, your haunt of choice would be the quaint, dozey pub. You enjoy nursing your drink in your usual corner while poring over the latest copy of *Rolling Stone* and don't take offence at being referred to as the arty type. Your night-outs are usually relaxed and peppered with interesting conversation, and you wait for them with oodles of anticipation. Though you keep your ears perked for the next number on the playlist, you prefer your music loud only when it is live – not DJ-controlled torture on your auditory nerves. You appreciate pubs for being plush havens of good music, food and alcohol — coupled with a charmingly relaxed ambience. You know you are always welcome to drown your woes or chill out with friends late into the night. So, bask in the thriving live music scene and soak in the hippie-meets-grunge-rocker spirit that falls on the right side of luxurious this party season.

Good pubs are hard to find but where there is live music and beer, there is soul

What hits the spot

MUMBAI The coolest city pub to dabble in different genres of live music, **Blue Frog** has a sinuous bar stretching along the length of the bar, and walls fitted with acoustic absorbers. The groovy pub, dotted with highly coveted pods, has a dazzling live music scene incorporating fusion and classic rock. If you're not overwhelmed by the throbbing atmosphere already, the establishment has more to offer. Blue Frog also doubles up as a fine dining restaurant and has a dance floor that's usually packed on Saturday nights. *Starts from ₹3,500.*

BE A SPORT

If you are hearty, affable and the (good-naturedly) opinionated sorts – this one's for you. For somebody who enjoys a good ol' argument about anything under the sun, where best to exercise your verbal talents than in a bonhomie-filled sports bar where beer flows and the chatter rises and falls in harmony with the throes of NFL matches? Let your competitive man instincts loose in the imaginatively recreated feel of a live match and indulge in cheering and hooting, which is acceptable, and even encouraged. The glistening, golden beer towers on almost every table and huge, strategically placed screens make you go misty-eyed in anticipation of the good times to follow. Jerseys, a little ribaldry and a crowd that knows its game without going aggressively overboard is your best pick since you need a charged up atmosphere as you watch every move with bated breath. The best bit is, you don't even need a reason to leave if the game slows down because the Golden Tee machine and foosball table are always crying out for attention. And here, no one will judge you for acting like an adrenaline-pumped 12-year-old.

What hits the spot

BANGALORE Decked in chic brown panelling with the cosiest seats you can imagine, the **Xtreme Sports Bar** in Indiranagar is understandably a huge crowd-puller. The only complaint that regulars have is that the place appears too small to accommodate all the people who don't want to miss out on the match nights. Resembling a sprawling living room littered with bean bags, the bar religiously delivers on its promise of an evening you'll want to keep revisiting. *Starts from ₹2,000.*

If you think brawn is no less than brain and look forward to every game, this one's for you

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Night-trippin'

If there's one thing Americans do well, it's party! The top three places they go to unwind.

BAR MUNICH

Named after a city where beer drinking has evolved into a culture, Bar Munich in Houston is every pub lover's picture of a perfect evening. Dressed in an Oktoberfest theme without seeming gimmicky, this joint serves a full menu of traditional Deutsche cuisine and beers rarely found outside the German hinterlands. The clean styling and laidback vibe of Houston pubs is faithfully replicated in the pub, which specifies the utter absence of cover charges or the particularity of a dress code. Pair their smoky kielbasa and bratwurst, Polish and German sausages, with the wide array of German beers for a truly fulfilling experience. To explode with the spirit of pubbing, do try their special cocktail — the Munich Bomb.

For a slice of Germany and a dash of Houston coupled with live music, head to Bar Munich with your friends

MULHOLLAND'S

No sports bar can ever match up to the feeling that Mulholland's Bar in Brooklyn induces, insist its loyal patrons. Its famous chicken wings are a primary reason why most love to catch the game there. The other reasons are, of course, the coolest condo-crowd — welcoming and friendly but not above jeering occasionally at opposing fans. On chilly nights the floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace is lit, adding warmth to the place. The only place this side of Brooklyn to be completely dedicated to sports, Mulholland's has a 50-foot mahogany bar, 12 HD plasma television screens and 22 kinds of beer on tap. And, feel free to wear your jerseys because others will be too.

Mulholland's bar, a comforting haven for football fans, makes no excuses for its sporty vibe

Entry into the classy Underground in Chicago is difficult, but once you are in, the party doesn't stop

THE UNDERGROUND

The Underground at Chicago, an avant garde military-themed club, is the epitome of kitsch with artillery case cocktail tables and glowing world maps. The convincingly bomb shelter themed décor is heightened by a mammoth armour plated DJ booth and candlelit ammunition crates. The club takes its exclusiveness seriously and the cocktails have names such as M16, Espionage and Che's Revolution. A basement converted into one of the classiest nightclubs on the north side of Chicago, this place has its very own rags-to-riches story to tell. Strobe lights, frequent celeb sightings, staffers outfitted in military garb, danceable music and very talented bartenders tell the rest.

MARINE CHRONOGRAPH MANUFACTURE

Driven by a fiercely independent spirit, Ulysse Nardin presents an enameled watch featuring the new manufacture chronograph movement UN – 150
18 ct rose gold with grand feu enameled dial, limited edition to 150 pieces

Movement: In house designed movement silicium escapement 28,800 v/h, Power Reserve approx. 48h Functions: Self-winiding, Chronograph with seconds hand in the centre. Small seconds counter at 9 O'Clock, 30 minutes counter 3 O'Clock, 12 hour counter at 6 O'clock, date 4 and 5 O' clock.
18 ct gold and stainless steel case with screw down security crown, 43 mm diameter, 100mm water resistance with anti reflector sapphire crystal. Leather strap with 18ct rose gold or titanium elements and folding buckle, 18 ct rose gold bracelet

ULYSSE NARDIN
SINCE 1846 LE LOCLE - SUISSE

KLM'S NEW WORLD BUSINESS CLASS SUPREME COMFORT IN EVERY DETAIL

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines believes in constantly innovating and upgrading its products and services to provide passengers utmost comfort and convenience. Latest is the revamped World Business Class (WBC) designed by Dutch design icon Hella Jongerius making KLM the first airline to have a designer design the entire cabin, from carpeting, curtains to pillows and seat upholstery.
KLM aircrafts from India are equipped with the new seats which are fully flat and 6.8 feet long. Seats have more legroom, no middle seat and a screen between the seats to provide more privacy. The new video monitors are 17 inches long for a wholesome inflight entertainment experience.
Compared to the competition KLM offers more comfort in bed length, privacy and In-light entertainment screen.
This move solidifies the avid efforts towards enhancing the WBC experience for valued customers.
Experience the new seat at www.klm.com/newwbc

Lights, Music, Party!

Hard as it may seem, hosting a party doesn't necessarily have to be a nightmare. Some tips to organise a bash that will be the talk of the town this season.

TEXT BY SAURAV BHANOT

THANKS TO THE SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS TIMES WE happen to live in, hosting a party with a discerning guest list is as important as getting an invite to the most happening bash in town. But, whatever may be the reason for your party, there's no denying the tiring days of planning involved in preparing for a few hours of unadulterated fun with friends and family.

While guests are the ones who really spruce up a party, setting the right ambience — be it through costumes or music — is as important as serving delectable food and drinks. Depending on your sensibilities, guests and the occasion concerned, you can either go all out or choose to be subtle; the end result in either case should be the loudest cracker of a party.

FORMAL OR CASUAL?

The first step to hosting a party starts right here, with the identification of its basic nature. Is it a bash for friends and family, or are you planning to call work mates and bosses? At the outset, it would be a good idea to carefully chart out your guest list. If somebody is too formal with you, keep him out of an event comprising an entirely casual group of people. Similarly, don't think too much before keeping a friend out of a work-only evening. It only helps to avoid awkward conversations among guests and people feeling like the odd-one-out. To decide the theme, brainstorm with a few people, browse the Internet or hire a professional agency to do everything for you. But remember, even an agency would need something from you to build the party on. As for the themes, let your imagination run wild — they can be as dramatic as Adam and Eve or as retro as 60's Bollywood and Elvis Presley.

Keeping 'informal' friends out of a work-only evening may be a good idea ▲

Expert Speak

Ankur Agarwal, director, Big Idea Box, Dubai

"Theme parties are seeing a tremendous rise all over the world. People are no longer shying away from donning a mask or wearing a specific outfit. Such concepts are only going to get bigger in the coming months."

▲ If your theme is too outlandish for a house party, choose an outdoors venue

PARTY IN OR OUT?

Before getting into other details, look into the logistics required to bring your vision to life. Keeping your budget in mind, decide on whether you want to pick a venue or just host the party at home. If you think that the theme you have picked is way too outlandish for a house party, choose an outside venue. But if you want the gathering to be more intimate, or simply choose to go easy on your wallet, a bash at your pad could be just what the doctor ordered. More importantly, feel free to alter your theme to make it more appropriate for the venue and occasion. Another important factor to be kept in mind is the purpose of the party. A celebratory occasion deserves a more lavish setting, and a casual weekend meeting can be made a close-knit affair. Depending on the venue and occasion, you might even have to alter your theme a bit to make it seem more appropriate.

Expert Speak

Vineet Hans, head-events and business development, Innovative Ideaz and Events Pvt Ltd, New Delhi

"The first thing when planning a party should be deciding on the location, keeping in mind the number of people you're inviting and their demographics. Make sure you have an open area or terrace if you're going to host a lot of youngsters."

FUN QUOTIENT

For the success of any party, it is of utmost importance to keep the guests entertained. While nothing beats a wonderful conversation, it's in your hands to make sure that the mood is right. Music maketh a party, and good tunes will certainly hit the right chord. While the music should depend on the kind of people coming to the party, it should also sync well with your theme. Playing Bollywood numbers for a wine and cheese gathering isn't a great idea after all! Also, always have a specific person, a DJ, assigned to the console – whether the party is at home or outside. A deck of cards or pool and foosball tables can be great additions to any party at home. You could even try a karaoke station; it's suitable for both home and outdoors. But, in the end, make sure you partake in a little enjoyment yourself — nobody at your party is going to be happy if the host keeps fretting over the smallest of issues.

Expert Speak

Ashish Nagpal, DJ

"For people who are keen on listening to good music in general, the genre could be anything from electronica, reggae and rock 'n' roll to hip-hop and Bollywood. For one, house music is a great rage with guests below 25 years of age."

A rock band comprising Wes Borland-lookalikes can work wonders for a Halloween party ▲

EATS 'N' DRINKS

Every party has a herd that heads to the bar as soon as it makes an appearance – showing how essential a good stock of F&B is. Make sure you stock your bar keeping in mind the drinking preferences of your guests, and don't forget to keep a few premium spirits for guests with a more discerning taste. You may even explore the option of having an expert mixologist at your party; everyone loves a drink that's specifically made for them off the menu. The basic rule for deciding your food menu is — food should be easy to make and easy to consume. The host should not be busy cooking or overseeing the cooking throughout the party, and the guests should not find it messy to consume. The current trend is to have a buffet with a lot of variety. If it is a brunch, opt for more grilled items and different kinds of salads. For an evening party, food that's warming and comforting is always preferred. Go for a counter of soups along with khao sui and steaming noodles. For a party that involves dancing, the food should be light, non-intrusive and neatly arranged on a platter. Sushi is an excellent option for such occasions. Most importantly, make sure nothing's missing when the party starts, you don't want to run out of munchies halfway through!

Expert Speak

Rohan Carvalho, Indian Ambassador, World Flair Association

"Keep the quantity of alcohol in check, add lots of fresh fruits to your cocktails and have a couple of batch cocktails handy. Flavoured alcoholic jello shots, shooters served in glassware and beach drinks served in coconut shells can also heighten the fun."

Expert Speak

Manish Mehrotra, chef

"Live stations with food custom-made to specific requirements are always a great idea. Fusion of different cuisines is the way to go. Spice up your menu with bruschetta with kimchi salad, fried rice with bacon or taco with Indian filling."

▼ Stock your bar well, keeping in mind the drinking preferences of your guests

QATAR AIRWAYS BECOMES PART OF oneworld!

Qatar Airways becomes part of oneworld® on 29th Oct'13 at Doha, adding one of the world's fastest growing and most highly rated airlines to the world's fastest growing and most highly rated global airline alliance.

At a ceremony to mark its entry into oneworld, held at Hamad International Airport, which will open soon as Qatar Airways' new home base, Qatar Airways spectacularly "unveiled" the first aircraft in its fleet to be decorated in a special oneworld livery – with the Boeing 777-300 becoming the first aircraft to "land" at the new airport.

For Qatar Airways, joining oneworld marks the latest achievement in its 16-year history. One of just seven carriers worldwide rated five-star by the Skytrax airline quality agency and the organisation's Airline of the Year 2011 and 2012 and runner-up 2013, Qatar Airways is the only one of the major Gulf carriers to join any of the global airline alliances. Qatar Airways, which serves more than 130 destinations in 70 countries, is oneworld's second member airline based in the Middle East.

His Excellency the Prime Minister of Qatar Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al-Thani officially inaugurates the State of Qatar's national carrier, Qatar Airways, as it joined the airline alliance oneworld. As he places the blue sphere on the lecturn, Qatar Airways Chief Executive Officer Akbar Al Baker looks on.

Qatar Airways 777 in oneworld livery is first aircraft to 'land' at Hamad International Airport

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Cox & Kings' Swiss Contrast is a 7-night/ 8-day tour which starts in St. Moritz and continues to Zermatt, Montreux and Lucerne.

For more details, log on to www.coxandkings.com

Dinner in Wonderland

Kiyan at Dusit Devarana turns eating into a near-poetic experience. BY JIMMY J

DROPPING BY KIYAN AT DUSIT DEVARANA for dinner is akin to visiting a palace after dark. The expanse unravels in a series of looming folds and graceful arches — dipping and swerving over your head as you make your way to the heart of the hotel, where the Kiyan restaurant stands gleaming. You struggle to take in everything that seems to have been magically brought to life from a Lewis Carroll book – low, wooden bridges cleaving through gently lapping water and a beautifully tended garden well-suited for a fictional mad tea party.

You enter the restaurant, and the plush sepia interiors – replete with a sinewy silver tree – are magnified by giant glass windows overlooking a lush lawn tastefully dotted with tiny lights. And just when you think the experience can't get any better, the attendant stops by to tempt you with a bottle of Wolftrap 2012.

We set off on our gastronomical journey by ordering a simple salad of goat's cheese and salted beetroot, topped with pine nuts and a sprig of fennel (in pic) to turn it into an exquisite spin-off on the classic salad.

House-made gnudi
Miso glazed sea bass

Meal for two
(alcohol extra)
₹3,000

21st Milestone,
Samalkha, NH-8,
New Delhi

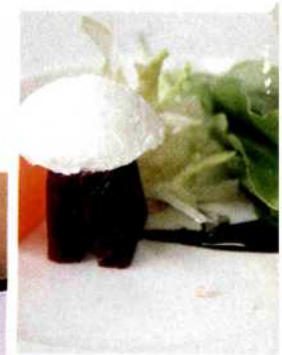
011-33552211

Accompanying it was tomato clementine soup, garnished with a slice of the humble orange's classier cousin. Now, the soup was prepared well, but it would have helped if the bread rolls were less dense.

But we weren't done with the appetizers yet. Next in line was the house made gnudi — miniature pillows of gooey ricotta cheese, smooth and crumbly to the touch — floating in a bed of white sauce.

The main course of miso glazed Chilean sea bass seemed designed to impress. When acquainted with our fork and knives, the crusted golden skin of the fish parted to reveal deliciously tender white flesh, and the fresh bok choy on the side only served to add an edgy feel to the dish. The puy lentils that accompanied the fish, however, only detracted from its harmony.

The dessert, a sinful toffee pudding doused with espresso caramel sauce, helped bring down the curtains on the event, and we left in the knowledge of an evening well spent.



The sepia-tinted surroundings only magnify the exquisiteness of the Kiyan dining experience ▲

Deeply soothing tones of copper and mahogany welcome you into the restaurant ▲
Pan-seared scallops with mushroom, green asparagus and chilli sambal ▶

Oriental Delights

The Mekong Restaurant takes you on a delightful tour of all the places touched by a beautiful river. BY GAYATRI JAYARAMAN

IN A CITY WHERE LOUNGES AND BARS mushroom with amazing regularity, the Li Bai Bar and Mekong Restaurant – with deeply soothing tones of copper and mahogany and 37th floor views of central Mumbai – come as quite a relief.

There is a South East Asian influence on everything in the establishment, right from the food and alcohol (some of which comes in mason jars) to the ambience. While cinnamon, star anise, ginger, plum and lemongrass is used copiously in their drinks, Libaitinis – house martinis made of baby chrysanthemum – are a treat to the senses. A well-stocked bar of regulars and classics, on the other hand, helps in the creation of smoke-infused cocktails like Spring Wind as well as others like Smoking China and Fog & Mist.

The menu at the restaurant is classified into Chinese, Vietnamese, and Thai, with food derived from every region the Mekong river flows into. While their Thai section – which has a measly selection of basic curries – is nothing to write home about, their Vietnamese and Chinese menus are brief, varied and cleverly designed. And, amazingly, some of their best dishes are the simplest – the prawn dimsums with a chilli oil dip, crispy squid with salt and pepper, and marinated shredded chicken with coriander, chilli and lemon juice – reflecting a basic faith in the ingredients.

The Vietnamese section was the most exciting of the lot, complete with crispy rolls stuffed with shrimp, crabmeat, shiitake mushrooms, glass noodles and fish sauce. Spicy green beans sautéed with tofu and chilli and lotus-leaf steamed fried rice with chicken and shrimp, turned out to be interestingly loaded bites. The two pork dishes on the menu – steamed sliced pork belly and sliced pork with vegetables – appeared in the Chinese section, and they were interesting options indeed. Desserts were not up when we went, and the ice creams did not excite, but we will give them a shot once the restaurant has had a little time to settle in. The perfect place for a beautiful Oriental evening.

Prawn dimsums
Crispy squid

Meal for two (alcohol extra)
₹5,000

Hotel Palladium
Lower Pareli

022-61628001

top shop

Style Essential

The tuxedo is one piece of outfit that will never go out of style, and no one knows it better than designer brand Alexander McQueen. This tuxedo jacket with tartan underlay is available exclusively at The Collective stores in the country, and is exactly what you'll need to shine at all the year-end parties.

Price: ₹60,000

Game On!

Made from walnut wood and carbon-fibre leather, Ralph Lauren's luxurious gift to the poker lover is truly a class apart. Inspired by James Bond, the poker set features polished nickel and powder coated game pieces and is an embodiment of sheer beauty and style. Here's something to proudly flaunt to your mates on those weekday poker nights.

Price: ₹62,995

High Definition Excitement

Epson has launched its new EH-TW5200 projector, which boasts of 1020p full HD projection with 3LCD technology and 480 hertz 3D drive, ensuring the brightest projection possible.

Price: ₹98,699

Design Delight

International furniture designer Michael Yeung's designs are known for being dramatic, and this vortex bookcase in shiny steel is no different. Part of a collection exclusively made for The Furniture Store, the bookcase will add a bold touch to your interiors while being useful at the same time.

Price: ₹7,75,500

Sound Seduction

Electronics brand Sennheiser is known for its headphones, which make listening to music a quality experience. Their new range of Momentum headphones, in stainless steel and leather, are a step ahead in that direction. Combining substance with style, these assure a musical experience like no other.

Price: ₹26,000

Time Tested

For the adventurous at heart, here's a timepiece that'll stand the test of time. The new Chronofighter Oversize's start and stop lever is made of plain carbon material, and its black ceramic bezel gives the watch both strength and shine. Each watch is also endowed with a calculated telemeter scale.

Price: On request

Words of Music

Marking its second century, Italian fine writing implements brand Montegrappa has brought out an exclusive range of Elvis Presley pens as part of its 'Icons' series. Four models in shades of aqua, green, black and white will represent four phases of Elvis' career from 1954 to 1977. The pens are engraved with profiles of Elvis at the microphone.

Price: On request

Coffee Couture

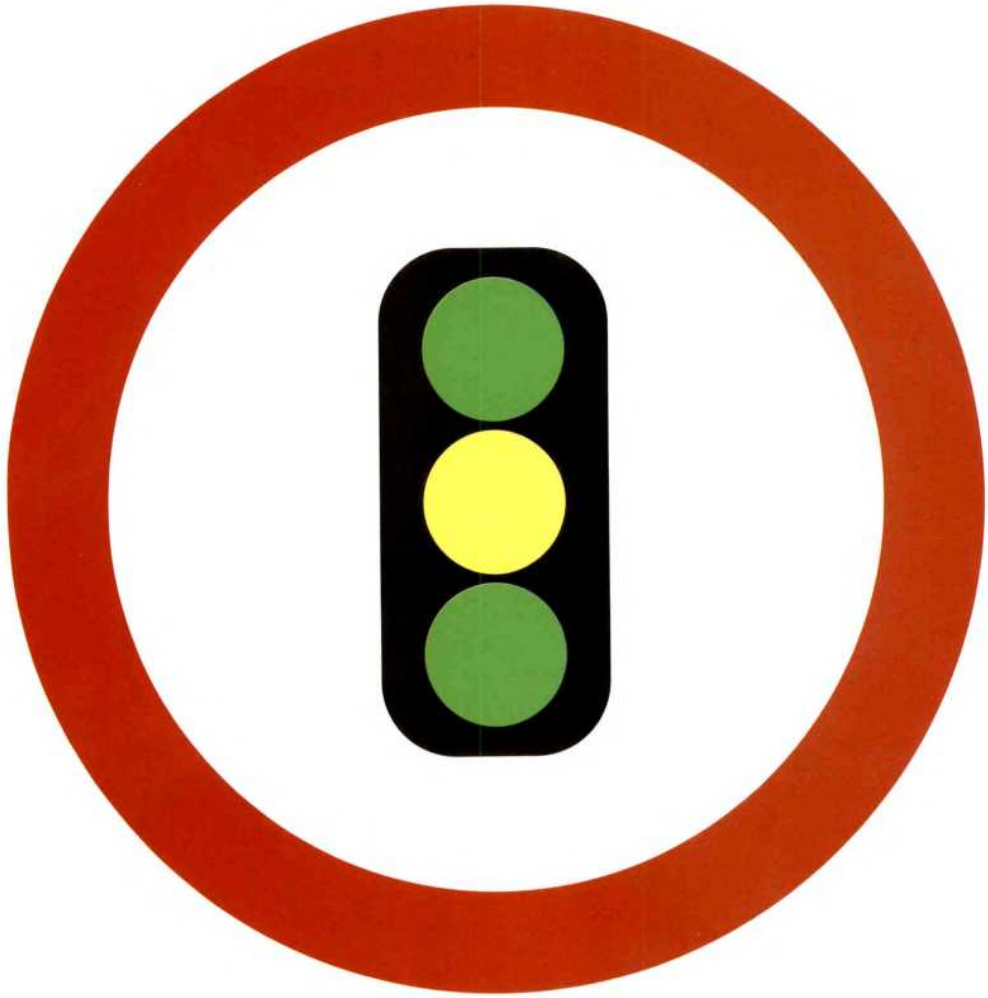
Ace designer Roberto Cavalli has designed an exclusive range of coffee cups for lifestyle brand Amara. The Roberto Cavalli Premium Palazzo Pitti coffee cups are made of bone china and bear the designer's signature stamp.

Price: ₹39,000 for a set of six

splurge

SPORTY PERFECTION

KNOWN FOR THE ART OF COMBINING TRADITIONAL VALUES WITH ITS INNOVATIVE VISIONS, SWISS luxury watch brand Hublot became the official timekeeper for German champions FC Bayern Munich, thereby announcing its partnership with the football club. The partnership also marked the launch of King Power FC Bayern Munich, a limited edition watch numbered at just 200 pieces. The watch has an automatic chronograph with a distinctive 45-minute counter developed especially for timing a soccer match. With a 48-mm case in vertical satin-brushed titanium, the bezel overmoulded with black rubber and six 'H' shaped titanium screws coated with black PVD, the watch is quite a beauty. Its skeletonised Caliber HUB4245 beats at a frequency of 28,800 vpz and has a power reserve of 42 hours. **Price on request.**



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